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E OF GENERAL LAFAYETTE

*BY BAYARD TUCKERMAN*









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LIFE  
OF  
GENERAL LAFAYETTE

WITH A CRITICAL ESTIMATE OF HIS  
CHARACTER AND PUBLIC ACTS

BY  
BAYARD TUCKERMAN

*IN TWO VOLUMES*

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# CONTENTS.

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## VOLUME II.

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PAGE

### CHAPTER I.

Work of the Assembly. — Lafayette's Excessive Spirit of Innovation. — His Relations with the Court. — With Mirabeau. — Management of the National Guard. — Political Position. — Insurrection the most holy of Duties. — The Federation . . . **i**

### CHAPTER II.

Dangers of Lafayette's Position. — Tumults in Paris. — Growing Unpopularity of Louis XVI. — The Journey to St. Cloud. — Lafayette's Mistake. — His Resignation and Resumption of Office. — His Ignorance of Human Nature and the French Character. — Flight of the King. — Lafayette's Vigorous Action at the Champ de Mars. — Completion of the Constitution and Final Resignation of Lafayette . . . **17**

### CHAPTER III.

Lafayette called from Retirement to command an Army. — His Campaign. — Decline of the Constitutional Party and Rise of Jacobin Power. — Lafayette's Letter. — The 20th of June. — Lafayette returns to Paris to support King and Constitution. — The 10th of August. — Jacobin Supremacy. — Imprisonment of the King. — Lafayette rejects Jacobin Overtures and leaves France. — End of his Revolutionary Career . . . **84**

## CHAPTER IV.

Lafayette taken by the Allies.—Imprisoned at Magdebourg and Olmütz.—The Reign of Terror in France.—Bollmann and Huger's Attempt at Rescue.—Joined in Prison by his Wife and Daughters.—His Release in 1797.—Two Years of Exile . . . . . 92

## CHAPTER V.

The Revolution of Brumaire.—Lafayette returns to France.—Intercourse with Bonaparte.—Retirement at Lagrange.—Settlement of his Debts.—Death of his Wife.—His Attitude toward the Consulate and the Empire . . . . 127

## CHAPTER VI.

1814.—Fall of Napoleon, and Restoration of the Bourbons.—The Hundred Days.—Course of Lafayette in the Representative Assembly of 1815.—Napoleon's Second Abdication.—The Second Restoration of Louis XVIII. by the Allied Armies.—Course of Lafayette towards the Government . 177

## CHAPTER VII.

Last Visit of Lafayette to the United States, in 1824 . . . . 212

## CHAPTER VIII.

The Revolution of 1830 . . . . . 224

## CHAPTER IX.

Death of Lafayette, in 1834.—His Descendants.—His Character . . . . . 251

# LIFE OF GENERAL LAFAYETTE.

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## CHAPTER I.

Work of the Assembly. — Lafayette's Excessive Spirit of Innovation. — His Relations with the Court. — With Mirabeau. — Management of the National Guard. — Political Position. — Insurrection the most holy of Duties. — The Federation.

IN October began the second emigration, and for two years the nobility continued to oppose the progress of the Revolution by going into voluntary exile. Only an honorable few remained with the king to share his trials, or took part in the efforts of the Assembly to establish a constitutional monarchy.

Abandoned by what should have been the conservative element in the community, the French people continued the work of building up a new State as different as possible from the old. The Assembly had become the sole authority in France, but its incapacity for the exercise of executive power was evident from the first. The great number of its members, the extreme disorder, lack of system, and excitability of its meetings, interfered fatally with the progress of business. Ridiculous interruptions continually took place, and silly deputations broke in on the most serious discussions with long addresses. The specta-

tors in the galleries frequently dictated the subjects to be considered and influenced the votes by applause and threats. For some months almost nothing was attempted but to destroy what remained of the old *régime*; and the destruction went on so precipitately as to involve the good with the bad. A vast number of monopolies, injurious privileges, restrictions on trade, and unjust taxes were done away with. The oppressive laws against the Protestants were repealed, and an effort made to reform the criminal system; but the changes were too sudden and sweeping. With other ancient institutions went the Church, whose property was confiscated and worship interfered with, leaving the people without a religious, as it was already without a political, guide. The passion for innovation pervaded the whole nation. A general demand called for the destruction of everything old, but no two men could agree upon the necessary substitutes.

Two distinct parties formed in the Assembly. On the right, under the leadership of Cazalès, the Abbé Maury, and the Comte de Montlosier, sat the conservative deputies who wished to establish on a sound basis the reforms already begun, and who opposed further innovations. On the left, Charles de Lameth, Barnave, Duport, and Talleyrand led the more radical party, whose opinions, though advanced, were conservative compared to those destined in the future to rule that side of the house. Mirabeau belonged at first to the left; but he was the only man of eminent



abilities to appreciate the dangers toward which the country was drifting, and this foresight inclined him more and more to take the conservative side.

During the winter of 1789-90, Lafayette's duties as the commander of the National Guard, and as the virtual chief of police, prevented his taking any important part in the deliberations of the Assembly. For the task of preserving order, he was much more fitted than for that of making a constitution. Like the rest of his countrymen, he was unfamiliar with the principles of practical statesmanship. He had never had any mental training likely to assist him in the solution of political problems. His education had been that of a *gentilhomme* and a soldier. His enthusiasm for free institutions, untempered by experience, caused him to follow easily in the rush for innovation. He fully sympathized in the work of the Assembly, and had unbounded confidence in the constitution then framing. The genuineness of his republican principles, and the precipitancy with which he was ready to adopt new measures in accordance with them, is illustrated by a scene in the Assembly in which he took a prominent part. The deputies, as usual, were discussing a trivial matter, while important ones remained untouched. The subject was the removal of some figures of slaves from the base of the statue of Louis XIV. A deputy named Lambel suddenly interrupted the discussion by shouting that not only should all statues be removed, but all monuments of pride, such as titles of nobility. The suggestion

was received with enthusiasm by his hearers. Lafayette rose immediately to second the motion. Another deputy, cooler than his companions, objected that merit should have its recompense, and asked what could be put in the place of the words, "Such a one has been made noble and count for having saved the State on such a day." Lafayette replied, "Suppress the words 'made noble and count;' say only, 'Such a one saved the State on such a day.' It seems to me that these words have something of an American character, precious fruit of the New World, which ought to aid much in rejuvenating the old one." On such recommendations this serious measure was carried by acclamation. Lafayette was as hasty and inconsiderate in his revolutionary progress as the rest of the Assembly; but he was thoroughly sincere, and never shrank from the results of his actions. After the fever of the Revolution, all titles were resumed as a matter of course. But Lafayette never suffered himself to be addressed as marquis, and was known only as "general" to the day of his death.

The relations of Lafayette with the king and queen during the winter of 1789-90 were necessarily strained, but Lafayette seems to have done what he could to make the king's position easier. The royal family could not look upon the commander of the National Guard with pleasure. He held his office independently of the crown, and his duty compelled him to watch as well as to guard the court. Two annoyances suffered by the king were unjustly ascribed to Lafay-

ette. The substitution of National Guards for body-guards in the Tuileries was extremely disagreeable to the royal family. But the antagonism between the body-guards and the populace of Paris was a constant menace to the peace of the city, and the officers themselves thought it advisable to remove their men. The change was favored at the time by the courtiers, who wished to make it appear that the king was a prisoner. The king missed his accustomed occupation of hunting, and Lafayette tried to afford him additional opportunities. But the population of Paris and the Assembly, becoming more and more suspicious of the king's movements, gradually brought about his confinement to Paris. All the letters and memorials addressed by Lafayette during this winter to Louis XVI. are marked by respect and loyalty. But Lafayette was too much in sympathy with the Revolution to appreciate the natural objections to it on the part of the court. He told the king that he ought to take offence at any remarks contrary to liberty or doubts as to the merits of the constitution. He declared that the court ought to abandon all appearance of restraint and discontent. It was too much to expect that such advice should be welcomed or followed.

While Lafayette was the most powerful man in France, the most able man was Mirabeau. In the beginning of the Revolution, Mirabeau had been the most radical member of the Assembly, and his attacks on the queen and the court had been no less than savage. But after the events of October, he saw

more plainly than any other public man the inevitable results of violence and precipitancy, and applied himself to check the destructive course of innovation. Recognizing in Lafayette an auxiliary indispensable to the success of his plans, he made overtures to him with a view to concerted action. An interview took place between the two men at Passy before the Assembly left Versailles. But the characters and previous records of Mirabeau and Lafayette prevented their reaching an understanding. Mirabeau secretly despised the visionary republicanism and scrupulous honor of the man he nicknamed "Grandison-Cromwell." Lafayette knew of Mirabeau what all the rest of the world knew, that his life had been distinguished chiefly by vice and prodigality ; that the eminent abilities he was now displaying were as likely to be used for evil ends as for good. Thus prejudiced against each other, the two men whose cordial coöperation might have conferred immense benefits on their country soon became irreconcilable. In the meeting at Passy, Lafayette declared at once that he could not work with a man who persecuted the queen as Mirabeau had done. Mirabeau was ready to compromise on that subject, saying with his usual frankness, "Very well, general, as you wish it, let her live. A humiliated queen may be useful ; a murdered queen is of no use but for the composition of a bad tragedy."

After the failure of this first attempt at agreement, the commander of the National Guards and the leader of the Assembly saw little of each other. When

Mirabeau had gone over altogether to the side of the court, and had accepted as the price of his services the payment of his debts and a considerable pension, the king urged him to make another attempt to come to an understanding with Lafayette, whose power with the people was such that nothing decisive could be done without him. Louis XVI. at the same time wrote to Lafayette, asking him to meet Mirabeau. Accordingly, Mirabeau wrote a conciliatory letter to the commander of the National Guard. The responsibility for the second failure to unite in concerted action the two chief men in France rests with Lafayette. It was a great misfortune that the deputy who swayed the Assembly by his eloquence and the general who possessed the complete confidence of the militia and the people could not have acted together for the public good. There is no doubt that Lafayette was short-sighted in his view of the subject, and gave too much weight to his personal dislike of Mirabeau. But when the positions of the two men are considered, it is evident that no lasting union could have existed between them. While Lafayette was devoting his fortune and his life to a cause which he believed would insure the happiness of the people, Mirabeau was secretly accepting money to bring about a partial return to the old despotic government. Mirabeau was right in his belief that France would go to ruin unless a considerable measure of real power were restored to the crown. Lafayette was altogether wrong in his belief that the constitution then forming

would bring to the country a future of peaceful liberty. But what is plain now, in 1790 was obscure.

The character of Mirabeau was so notoriously bad, that he possessed the confidence neither of the court party who paid him, nor of the popular party whom he controlled by his eloquence. He himself frequently lamented the sins of his youth which stood in the way of the services which he earnestly wished to render to his country. His private correspondence and his written recommendations to the court, which prove to posterity his wisdom and his sincerity, were unknown to Lafayette. To the commander of the National Guard, Mirabeau was a man of eminent abilities, but a man, too, whose private and political career excited general distrust. Such distrust was not misplaced when its object was in the pay of one party while ostensibly leading another. Thus the two most powerful men of the earlier part of the Revolution remained apart. Lafayette's natural justice of character is shown by the estimate which he left of his adversary: "Mirabeau was not inaccessible to money; but for no sum would he have sustained an opinion destructive to liberty or dishonorable to his mind."<sup>1</sup>

During the winter of 1789-90, Lafayette was incessantly occupied with his duty of preserving order and of drilling the National Guard, in both of which he achieved success. His first important act after October was to rid the kingdom of the Duke of

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<sup>1</sup> *Mémoires de Lafayette: Correspondance de Mirabeau et du Comte de la Marck.*

Orleans. This personage, whom all parties justly unite in execrating, had hoped, by stirring up the worst elements of discord, to dethrone Louis XVI. and to transfer the crown to his own branch of the family. From the beginning, the duke had not only sided with the most violent of the revolutionists, but he had taken every opportunity to insult the king's family and to increase the dangers of their position. To his party has generally been ascribed the authorship—as far as there was any authorship—of the events of October. Lafayette took so vigorous a stand against him and threatened him so effectually that he accepted a pretended mission to England, where he remained for several months, despised alike by French exiles and by Englishmen of every shade of opinion.

At the end of October two violent bread riots occurred, in one of which a baker named François was murdered, and in the other the mob attempted to break into the convents to pillage them of their provisions. The latter attacks were frustrated by Lafayette and his Guards, but they arrived too late to save the baker's life. The leaders in both riots were discovered and hung the next day.

The public mind was greatly excited during the winter by two trials. A conspiracy was discovered, in which a royalist named Favras was believed to have acted a principal part. Favras was tried before the Châtelet court, condemned, and executed, to the great indignation of the court. As Lafayette had been

active in discovering the conspiracy, the death of Favras was ascribed by the royalists to him. Lafayette, however, had never known Favras until his arrest, and had nothing to do with his condemnation, for which the court of the Châtelet was alone responsible. The celebrated Baron de Besenval, an ultra-royalist, was tried in the same court and acquitted. Lafayette had saved his life before when sought by a mob, and he did so again after the trial, when the populace, furious at the verdict, attempted to execute the baron themselves. On this occasion Morris recorded in his diary, "All agree that Lafayette has acted with great prudence and decision."

The National Guard was a very difficult body to govern. Ready to sacrifice military duty to private business, turning like weather-cocks with every political breeze, the commander-in-chief had to supplement authority with flattery and personal appeals in order to maintain discipline. "We are lost," he said this winter to a reunion of officers, "if the service continues to be conducted with such great inexactitude. We are the only soldiers of the Revolution; we alone should defend the royal family from every attack; we alone should establish the liberty of the representatives of the nation; we are the only guardians of the public treasury. France, all Europe, have fixed their eyes on the Parisians. A disturbance in Paris, an attack made through our negligence on these sacred institutions, would dishonor us forever, and bring upon us the hatred of the provinces."



Lafayette has been accused by hostile writers of seeking to extend his military authority over the National Guards outside of Paris, with a view to making himself the executive head of the kingdom. The baseless character of such imputations is sufficiently exposed by reference to a speech delivered by him to the commune of Paris, when a motion was made to unite all armed forces under one head: "Suspend this movement which honors me; let us await with submission the decrees which will definitely fix the organization of the National Guard; above all, let us offer no example, no pretext, no resource, to ambition. For myself, the prayer that I shall make to the National Assembly when it legislates on this important point of the constitution, will be that the command of two departments shall never be united in one person."<sup>1</sup> After the ceremony of the Federation, the provincial deputies, on taking leave of Lafayette, thus addressed him on this subject: "The deputies of the National Guards of France depart, regretting their inability to name you their chief. They respect the constitutional law, which at this moment checks the impulse of their hearts. And what should forever cover you with glory is that you yourself have placed this limit to our gratitude."

The whole of Lafayette's revolutionary career establishes the certainty that he never so much as desired to acquire any permanent power for himself. With him liberty was an abstract principle which he cher-

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<sup>1</sup> Camille Desmoulins : *Révolutions de France et de Brabant*, i., 565.

ished with a religious fervor and trust. He always regarded his own part in the Revolution to be the maintenance of order until a constitution should place France again upon a firm basis. In the beginning of 1789, he had been among the most determined of revolutionists. But when the abuses of the old *régime* had been destroyed, and the Assembly was occupied with its work, he made every effort to prevent further violence. The phrase, "insurrection is the most holy of duties," so frequently put in his mouth, he indignantly repudiated as expressive of his views. In 1790, when addressing the Assembly on the subject of disorders in the provinces, he said, "Disorders have been unavoidable in the Revolution; the old order was but slavery, and *in this case* insurrection is the most holy of duties. But for the success of the constitution, the new order must be strengthened, personal safety must be assured, the new constitution must be loved, the public powers must acquire force and energy." Lafayette complained bitterly that, by ascribing to him the isolated phrase, "insurrection is the most holy of duties," his enemies had substituted "a maxim of anarchy in place of the right and duty of resistance to oppression," which he claimed to exist in all the teachings as well as in the acts of his life. "Would to God," he exclaimed in later life, "that this holy duty of resistance to oppression had been exercised against the violation of constitutional authority in 1792, against the bloody tyranny of the Reign of Terror, and against the arbitrary ambition of the

Imperial *régime* !” To Mounier, once the most prominent deputy in the Assembly, but who had retired from political life in disgust, Lafayette wrote, “Devoted by affection and by duty to the cause of the people, I shall combat with equal ardor aristocracy, despotism, and faction. I know the faults of the National Assembly ; but it seems to me much more dangerous, and it would be truly wrong, to discredit it. I hate the too great influence of a single man, but I am more penetrated than you think with the necessity of restoring the executive power.”

Up to the summer of 1790, while the Assembly pursued its constitutional labors and comparative order was maintained by the National Guard, Lafayette was the most powerful and the most popular man in France. The court, while hating him as the impersonation of the victorious people, depended upon him for its personal safety. The Assembly relied upon him as its guardian, the militia as its trusted commander, and the people as a bulwark against any return to the old despotism. How unstable was that power, and how lightly withdrawn that popular confidence, only a few months were needed to show.

Lafayette's life was so absorbed in public affairs that he could see little of his family. His house was always open, his dinner-table crowded by persons who seized that moment to exchange views with him. His fortune was being steadily impaired by the demands of his situation. But the apparent realization of his cherished dreams made this period a happy one. With Wash-

ington he maintained his usual correspondence. When he had caused the Bastille to be demolished, he sent the key of the fortress to his old commander as a tribute from "a son to an adopted father, an aide-de-camp to his general, a missionary of liberty to her patriarch."

The approach of the 14th of July, 1790, the first anniversary of the storming of the Bastille, was considered by the Parisians as an appropriate opportunity for a grand demonstration in favor of the Revolution. After much discussion concerning the special form which the demonstration should take, it was determined that on that day the king in his own person and all France in the persons of deputies from the capital and the provinces should take a solemn oath to support forever the new constitution. That instrument was hardly more than begun, and no one knew what its provisions would be ; but to swear fidelity to it, notwithstanding, seemed very natural to the French mind.

The Champ de Mars, destined to be the scene of the great ceremony, was converted with extraordinary rapidity into a vast amphitheatre. Fearful lest it should not be completed in time, all good patriots lent their aid. Men and women of every rank gathered on the scene from sunrise to sunset, with spade and wheelbarrow, enlivening the work with patriotic songs. Idle spectators were pressed into the service. Thousands of workmen hurried through their daily tasks elsewhere to devote some hours to the great work.

Deputations from the suburbs marched in, spade on shoulder. One hundred thousand persons were sometimes engaged in the labor at the same time. Such was the enthusiasm that Lafayette and his patrols had little to do in the city. All the revolutionary fervor was concentrated for the time on the effort to build the amphitheatre in which French liberties were to be declared everlasting.

As the great day approached, the deputies from the provinces arrived in the city. They were called *Fédérés*, and numbered about fourteen thousand. As the results of the Revolution had so far seemed beneficial to the country, the *Fédérés* were well disposed toward the king. Had the court cultivated their friendship, much good might have resulted; but they were allowed to fall altogether under the influence of the Jacobins, who took care to send them home with ideas much more revolutionary than those which they had brought to Paris. They were the guests of the city. Lafayette kept open house for them, and as many as two hundred sometimes dined under his roof.

On the 14th of July, the vast amphitheatre at the Champ de Mars was crowded with more than three hundred thousand persons: the court, the Assembly, the National Guard, and the people gathered together as the French nation to swear obedience to the constitution which was to rule them all. A solemn Mass, celebrated by the infamous Talleyrand, appropriately opened the splendid but hollow ceremony. Louis

XVI. first took the oath, and then Lafayette, who was made for that day commander-in-chief of all the armed forces of France, advanced, placed the point of his sword on the altar, and took the oath as the representative of the French people. His "*Je le jure*" was repeated by three hundred thousand voices.

With the ceremony of the Champ de Mars ended what was best in the Revolution. A patriotism, enthusiastic and sincere, although often misled, had pervaded the people. The abuses and oppressions against which the nation had risen had been abolished. For a time it seemed that France might settle down into a new and better order. But the oath taken with so much ostentation, like so many other oaths in French history, had not the least binding force. The constitution, to which obedience was sworn before it was framed, turned out to be impracticable. The fires of discontent, of disorder, of savage vengeance, had yet to burn themselves out. Lafayette had staked his reputation on the constitution, and had taken his oath with a sincerity which nothing could shake. While he remained faithful to the principles of a constitutional monarchy, the mass of his countrymen rushed on to anarchy.

## CHAPTER II.

Dangers of Lafayette's Position.—Tumults in Paris.—Growing Unpopularity of Louis XVI.—The Journey to St. Cloud.—Lafayette's Mistake.—His Resignation and Resumption of Office.—His Ignorance of Human Nature and the French Character.—Flight of the King.—Lafayette's Vigorous Action at the Champ de Mars.—Completion of the Constitution and Final Resignation of Lafayette.

It soon became evident that the appearance of order and unanimity presented by the Federation was quite illusory. Not a month had elapsed before Lafayette was obliged to issue an address to the National Guard, in which he summed up the continued instances of conspiracy and violence which "have evidently no aim but to overthrow the infant constitution and to substitute for it the horrors of anarchy and internal strife." His efforts to keep order made him numberless enemies among the different parties who, whether seeking a restoration of the monarchy or the establishment of a republic, were equally desirous of discrediting the constitutional labors of the Assembly.

The turbulent masses of the population grew restive under the control of Lafayette's patrols, which checked their passion for rioting and plunder. The words "Fayettism" and "patrollism" became terms of opprobrium directed against the reign of law which the commander of the Guard sought to maintain. On

the other hand, the intrigues of the court incessantly attacked the reputation of the man whose power was an insuperable obstacle to counter-revolution. Lafayette was beginning to experience the dangers of the middle course which he had laid out for himself. The aristocracy hated him for being a revolutionist. The Jacobins were beginning to hate him for not being revolutionary enough. But for the present his reputation and conduct were sufficient to overcome all attacks. Lord Gower, the English ambassador, wrote to his government in September: "M. de Lafayette's popularity, which was considerably sunk by the money and calumny of his enemies, is again rising, and he is daily visited by large bodies of national militia from the different sections of Paris and from the neighboring municipalities who come to assure him of their attachment."

The bitterness of the feeling between the conservative and the radical deputies in the Assembly found a vent in many duels. The frequency of these gave rise to a belief among the suspicious populace that a conspiracy was on foot by which the aristocrats were to destroy the patriotic deputies in this way. When Charles de Lameth was wounded in a duel in November, 1790, by the Duc de Castries, a spirit of revenge took possession of the mob. Rushing to the Hotel de Castries, the rioters climbed the garden-walls, entered the building, and in a few moments had thrown all the furniture out of the windows. The attack was so sudden that when Lafayette arrived on



the scene with the guards everything portable had been destroyed, but he frustrated the attempt of the mob to burn the building. Lafayette's aristocratic enemies accused him of standing by without interference. But the Marshal de Castries was among his intimate friends, and he was extremely mortified at the unavoidable destruction which occurred. The riot was the occasion of a violent debate in the Assembly, in which Lafayette's conduct was sustained.

In February, 1791, other tumults occurred, resulting from the spirit of unrest and distrust which pervaded all parties. Just outside of Paris stood the fortress of Vincennes, which formerly had been a prison of state, but was now entirely unused. The Jacobins, always anxious to create disorder, organized an attack upon Vincennes, and instigated the populace by spreading rumors that the fortress contained prisoners of state. A large mob, led by designing men, marched out on the 28th of February and proceeded to demolish the building. Santerre, the brewer who had figured in so many scenes of disorder, followed with a detachment of National Guards, ostensibly to control the mob, but really to encourage it. As soon as the news of this expedition reached Lafayette, he marched with his staff and a considerable body of troops. The work of demolition he found just begun, but by arresting sixty of the ringleaders and by assuring the crowd that the fortress was empty, he succeeded in quelling the disturbance. Sending on the people before him, he returned to Paris with his prisoners. On arriving

at the gates of the Faubourg St. Antoine, he found them closed against him ; but a threat to blow them open with cannon soon had the desired effect. The mob was out in force in the Faubourg, much irritated by Lafayette's interference, throwing stones and threatening ; but the general's determined attitude overawed opposition, and he took his prisoners to the Conciergerie.

The same day events occurred at the Tuileries which did much to aggravate the king's position. A number of noblemen, chiefly from the provinces, were in the habit of living near the Tuileries with a view to protect the king in case of attack. On all occasions of tumult they repaired to the palace, armed, in order to afford what assistance might be necessary. The news of the riot at Vincennes suggested to these noblemen the likelihood of trouble in Paris, and, in accordance with their custom, they assembled in the outer apartments of the royal family, armed with pistols and daggers. The circumstance might have passed unnoticed, but for the imprudence or arrogance of some of them in allowing their arms to be seen. The National Guards then posted in the palace took great offence at the presence of the armed nobles who thus intimated that the king's life was not safe in the hands of its legal guardians. A conflict was imminent, but was averted by the king. The nobles were only disarmed and some of them maltreated by the Guards. But the event was magnified by the Jacobin orators and papers, who represented to the

public that an organized attempt had been made to murder the revolutionary chiefs. The friends of the king were afterwards known as the *chevaliers du poignard*, and when so identified were never spared by the mob. Lafayette arrived from Vincennes in time to see the "chevaliers" disarmed in the Tuileries. He upbraided them for their conduct, being very angry at the lack of confidence which their action displayed in his ability and willingness to protect the king.

Yet the melancholy fact that the National Guard was growing less and less equal to its responsibilities toward the royal family needed only time for verification. A feeling of enmity was steadily increasing in the public mind toward the sovereign who had yielded so much to the wishes of his subjects. The laws lately passed in the Assembly relating to the civil constitution of the clergy had imposed on all priests an oath which forced them into a position of antagonism toward either their church or the French government. Thus, at a time when the political situation was as dangerous as possible, the passion of the Assembly for innovation introduced religious dissensions which were soon to lead to a bloody civil war. The priests who refused to take the oath were shamefully persecuted and some were murdered. The religious convictions of Louis XVI. forbade his hearing Mass said by a priest who had taken the oath. The fact that his officiating chaplain was a non-juror was freely used by his enemies to excite against him the suspicion of the masses.

The king's conscientious scruples were not considered by a people who had cast aside religion, and his course was ascribed wholly to a desire to oppose the Assembly. In order that he might hear the orthodox Easter services in peace, the king resolved to pass that day at St. Cloud, a palace in the vicinity of Paris, where he had been the previous summer. The 18th of April, 1791, was fixed for his departure, and on that day was displayed the anarchic condition of France at even this comparatively peaceful period of the Revolution.

Mme. de Tourzel, the governess of the Dauphin, states that angry crowds had gathered about the palace the day before, uttering imprecations against the king for his course toward the clergy, and declaring that he should not leave for St. Cloud. The populace was making the most of its new theory that any riotous gathering in the streets constituted "the nation," and that its wishes must be obeyed. Lafayette probably allowed too much freedom to these assemblages. So long as they committed no act of violence they met with no interference, and so grew constantly bolder. However, it must be remembered that in the excited state of the public mind and in the absence of any real government, it was extremely difficult to disperse a crowd without arousing great animosity and suspicions of counter-revolution.

At ten o'clock in the morning of the 18th of April, the court-yard of the palace was quiet, but about an hour later a large crowd had assembled in a very bad

humor. The royal family, however, entered their travelling-carriage without any fear of disturbance, when the crowd seized the horses' heads and declared that the king should not move. An appeal to the National Guards was answered only by rebellion, and the grenadiers themselves blocked the way of the carriages. The royal family remained seated, surrounded by the mob, who indulged in vile cries and nearly murdered one of the king's servants who tried to keep the rabble from the carriage windows. The king acted with more firmness than usual. Putting his head out of the window, he cried, "It would be an astonishing thing, if, after having given liberty to the nation, I myself should not be free."

At this point Lafayette and Bailly arrived and harangued the mob and the Guards, pointing out that their conduct was not only wrong, but unconstitutional. The crowd was obstinate, repeating that "the first public functionary," as the king was now called, should obey "the supreme will of the people." The progress which the French were making in their acquaintance with freedom is well illustrated by the superiority thus accorded to the caprice of a mob over the law of the land. Lafayette, having for a long time argued in vain with his refractory National Guards, approached the carriage, offered to use force to accomplish the departure, and requested the king to give the necessary orders. Then again Louis XVI. rose to the situation. "It is for you, sir," he replied to Lafayette, "to see to what is necessary for the due

fulfilment of your constitution." Mme. de Tourzel was in the carriage and saw all that occurred. She says that Lafayette again harangued the mob, and, failing to move it, returned to the carriage and informed the king that his departure would be attended with danger. Louis XVI. then left the carriage with his family and returned to his apartments profoundly affected by the result of his concessions to the people.<sup>1</sup>

Lafayette says that he begged the king to give him time to open a passage for the carriages, and that while he was busy with the mob, the royal family retired of their own accord.<sup>2</sup> This was no excuse for him, because after a passage had been opened, the king might have been asked to return to his carriage. Lafayette admits that a battalion of National Guards, stationed in the Tuileries gardens, offered their services to secure the king's departure. Thus he was sure of a force obedient to his orders, sufficiently strong, at least, to make an attempt to sustain the law. That he made no use of this offer shows that he, like the Assembly, was not altogether averse to the forcible detention of the king, and that he did not consider the fulfilment of the king's lawful plans important enough to justify a conflict.

On that day Lafayette was blind to his duty to the king, to the constitution, and to himself. That the king should thus have been deprived of his liberty by

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<sup>1</sup> *Mémoires de la Duchesse de Tourzel*, Chapter XI.

<sup>2</sup> *Mémoires de Lafayette*.

an irresponsible mob, while the Assembly sat an idle witness, while the National Guards ignored their oaths, plainly meant that the government of France was neither in the crown nor in the Assembly, but that the will of any chance riotous gathering was more powerful than both.

The constitution, which all France had sworn with such pomp and ceremony to obey, was already discredited, and Lafayette failed to see that such was the case. As commander of the military force, it was his duty to see that obedience to the laws was carried out at any cost. The danger of bloodshed which a vigorous course might involve was as nothing compared to the consequences of failure. Not only did Lafayette remain blind to these consequences, but he did not appreciate the damage done to his own authority. That the commander of the National Guard should see his orders disobeyed by his own men was death to his future influence. This he did not perceive; nor did he realize the patent fact that his authority had no stable foundation. His Guards followed when he led where they wished to go, but they had no idea of obeying orders which conflicted with their political views.

The cause of Lafayette's failure in this emergency is to be found partly in his political principles and partly in the circumstances where the Revolution had placed him. There is no question of his personal courage, nor of his sincere desire to serve the public interest. But, like the rest of his countrymen, he

was becoming more and more misty as to the meaning of the words "sovereign people" and "liberty." The Revolution, which had disorganized the internal economy of the country, had also unsettled the minds of individuals, until vague patriotism and empty catch-words took the place of common sense. Lafayette had been carried along the revolutionary current far enough to be capable of confounding a mob with the nation. He had come to share the ridiculously exaggerated idea of the "popular will," which then led the masses of the people to believe that the king and all other authorities should yield to street dictation rather than appear despotic by opposing it. Lafayette's childlike ignorance of human nature was such that it never occurred to him that such a victory for lawlessness must be followed by still worse instances of mob rule.

Another cause for Lafayette's course is to be found in his statement that "the court wished to establish the fact that it was violently detained in Paris," and was practically an accomplice in its own detention. This suspicion is undoubtedly unfounded. The court hated its prison like existence in the Tuileries, and longed for the comparative freedom of St. Cloud. Lafayette's suspicions illustrate the universal feeling of distrust which now prevailed among all classes. There was confidence nowhere, and the dread word "suspect" was beginning to be frequently heard.

Although Lafayette's conduct on the 18th of May is here severely blamed, it is important to remember



that his course was nearly universally approved at the time. The doctrine that the king should obey "the supreme will of the people," as announced by a Paris crowd, was so generally accepted, that the partisans of the Revolution then, and even now, have no fault to find with Lafayette in this instance.

The Assembly was the real government of France, and that body was quite accustomed to dictation from the "sovereign people" in its galleries. Soon after the 18th of April, the king went to the Assembly, complained of the treatment to which he had been subjected, and plainly showed that he expected the deputies to request him to persevere in taking the journey. But Mirabeau was dead, and the party of Robespierre now led that impotent assemblage. The deputies would only pass resolutions of regret for what had occurred, thus giving a tacit sanction to the self-constituted authority of the mob, and passing over in silence the violation of their precious constitution.

Although Lafayette, like the Assembly, had no idea of the anarchic condition into which the country was drifting, he did realize that a general whose troops disobeyed him could no longer continue in command. The next day he sent in his resignation as commander of the National Guard. The Commune of Paris remonstrated with him and begged him to withdraw it. Crowds of Guards surrounded his house, and deputation after deputation entered to ask him to resume command. There is no doubt that every one interested in the tranquillity of the city was anxious to

see him again in office. There was no one to take his place who stood any chance of being equally useful in the preservation of order. He went to the Commune and made an address. "I do not believe," he said, "that the National Guard, of which the great majority has always been inaccessible to the seductions of license and faction, has seen with indifference what has caused my discouragement,—constitutional authorities disregarded, their orders despised, the public force opposed to the execution of the law, of which the protection was confided to it. We are citizens, gentlemen, we are free ; but without obedience to the law, there is only confusion, anarchy, despotism ; and if this capital, the cradle of the Revolution, instead of surrounding with intelligence and respect the depositaries of national power, should besiege them with tumult, or fatigue them with violence, it would cease to be the example of Frenchmen, it would risk becoming their terror." The results of lawlessness in Paris, which Lafayette held up as a possibility, were already facts ; but he appreciated the real condition of the country so little as to think that the events of April 18 constituted only an isolated case of insubordination. When the sixty battalions of National Guards passed resolutions providing that every soldier should swear on his honor to obey the law, and that such as refused should be expelled, Lafayette consented to resume command on condition that the particular companies which had revolted on April 18 should be disbanded. This condition was agreed to and carried

out; but its effect was destroyed by the conduct of the Jacobins, who placarded the walls of Paris with praises of the rebellious troops and feasted them as models of patriotism.

When the National Guards resolved to take a new oath of fidelity to the law, and thus become "regenerated," Lafayette said that "the momentary error of a small number of National Guards served only to show still more the spirit which animated this citizen army." Lafayette's unbounded confidence in human nature, and his pride in the military institution which he had done so much to establish, prevented his seeing the truth. What he called a "momentary error" was a permanent vice. The Guards had already taken the most solemn oaths, had violated them repeatedly, and would violate them again without compunction.

This taking of oaths at every turn is a curious phenomenon of the French Revolution. Almost nothing was done without a dramatic swearing, to which no one afterwards accorded any importance. In April, 1789, Morris wrote to Washington that he feared the results of the coming Revolution, because "there is one fatal principle which pervades all ranks: it is a perfect indifference to the violation of engagements. Inconstancy is so mingled in the blood, marrow, and very essence of this people, that when a man of high rank and importance laughs to-day at what he seriously asserted yesterday, it is considered as in the natural order of things." This inconstancy manifested itself at every juncture of the Revolution. It was impossi-

ble to tell how long any man or any party would sustain the same principles. Lafayette devoted himself consistently through life to the same objects; but he never discerned nor took into account that ingrained fickleness of his countrymen which had so great an effect on the course of events. He still believed in the reliability of the people and in the value of the constitution; when his eyes were opened it was too late.

Louis XVI. had made all his sacrifices with patience in the expectation that quiet times would return with the establishment of a constitutional monarchy. He had refused to lend himself to several plans which had already been devised for his escape from Paris. But after April his feelings underwent a great change. His religious convictions were shocked by the proceedings against the clergy; his pride was wounded by finding himself a prisoner within his own palace. All his concessions had won for him no gratitude. The prying suspicion and savage enmity of which he knew himself to be the object made a further stay in Paris seem dangerous as well as painful.

The escape finally resolved upon was arranged by the Baron de Breteuil, who from Brussels directed the plans. The Marquis de Bouillé, Lafayette's cousin, who commanded the army in the districts through which the king would pass, took the military precautions. The Count de Fersen had charge of the departure from the Tuileries. The plans were necessarily known to a considerable number of persons.

The Baroness de Korff, whose newly built travelling-carriage was to be used, was in the secret. Mrs. Sullivan, the friend of Count Fersen, went to England and informed the Prince of Wales. Marie Antoinette had ordered and packed a large quantity of travelling clothes, which was enough to inform the members of the court that something unusual was in contemplation. A number of persons had to be trusted with the secret whose services would be necessary ; among them three Guards.

It was inevitable that some knowledge of the approaching event should be acquired by the morbidly suspicious populace. Reports of the intended escape were conveyed to Lafayette, who mentioned them to the king. But the latter assured him so positively that nothing of the sort was thought of, that the general declared that he would answer for the king with his head. He said that his confidence in the king's statement was such that he felt some remorse for the extra precautions which he took.

In the evening of the 20th of June, Lafayette called upon Bailly, who had received some new information regarding the flight. The two men talked the matter over together. For two years the revolutionary papers had predicted, periodically, the flight of the king, and rumors of such an event had been so common that people had ceased to receive them with attention. Lafayette and Bailly concluded that there was no more in the new revelations than in the old, but, as a matter of safety, it was decided that some additional

precautions should be taken. Going to the Tuileries, Lafayette informed Gouvion, the officer in command, of the current rumors, and ordered him to instruct his officers to walk about the court-yards during the night. Soon after Bailly appeared, and with Lafayette went upstairs to attend the "*coucher*" of the king.

Meanwhile, Mme. de Tourzel, Mme. Elizabeth, the queen, and the children were together in the queen's room. Marie Antoinette, having observed from the window that all seemed quiet, embraced Mme. de Tourzel and said, "The king and I, madame, place in your hands, with the utmost confidence, all that we hold dear in the world. Everything is ready; go." Mme. de Tourzel, with the children, descended by a little-used stairway, and entered a hackney-carriage driven by the Count de Fersen. To avoid suspicion, the count drove along the quays for a little while before he stopped in the Rue St. Honoré, at the appointed rendezvous. There the occupants of the carriage passed three anxious quarters of an hour, during which the count played his part by whistling, taking snuff, and chatting with a cabman who happened to be standing near. Suddenly madame the king's daughter exclaimed, "There is M. de Lafayette!" The frightened Mme. de Tourzel hid the dauphin under her petticoats. But Lafayette, and soon after Bailly, passed by unsuspectingly.

Both had just come from the king's "*coucher*," where an animated discussion had caused them to

stay later than usual. The king, whose thoughts were with the carriage waiting in the Rue St. Honoré, had longed to be rid of his guests, but was careful to conceal any signs of impatience. At last Lafayette and Bailly took their leave, and on the way home passed by the waiting carriage, feeling sure that all was well.

As soon as they had gone, the king, to disarm suspicion, undressed and got into bed. When entirely alone, he got up again, dressed, put on a wig, and descended the public staircase. The halls were still full of people passing out of the palace as usual, and the king walked out among them. So little attention did he excite, that his shoe-lace becoming loose, he stooped to fasten it without attracting notice. Having gained the street, he was soon safely seated in the carriage. By this time it was after twelve, and the queen had not yet arrived. She did not leave the palace until after the king, and then had some trouble in finding the place of meeting. She was accompanied by a body-guard. On her way she passed by Lafayette's carriage and had a moment of fright. When at last the royal family were united, they embraced each other with gratitude. The carriage passed the barriers without trouble, and in due time Mme. de Korff's berlin was found waiting outside and the real journey began.

The spirits of the unfortunate party rose as the distance from Paris increased. At about eight o'clock in the morning, the king looked at his watch and said,

“Lafayette just now does not know what to do with himself.” Mme. de Tourzel mildly observes, “It was difficult to share the anxiety of the general, or to have any other feeling than one of joy at having thrown off our dependence on him.”

The flight was not discovered until about six o'clock in the morning. The news was immediately conveyed to Lafayette, who made the best of his way to the Tuileries, being joined in the street by Bailly and Beauharnais, the president of the Assembly and the first husband of the Empress Josephine. The Assembly was convoked, and meanwhile Lafayette despatched messengers in every direction with orders to the National Guard to stop the fugitives.

A great and angry crowd soon surrounded the Tuileries, threatening death, as usual, to all persons whom they saw fit to consider responsible for the escape. Lafayette himself was the object of great fury. Making his way to the Hotel de Ville, he found another mob there, which had seized M. d'Aumont, the officer who had been in command at the palace the night before. Lafayette rescued d'Aumont and then harangued the people, who soon abated their violence toward himself. In replying to their lamentations he said, “If you call this occurrence a calamity, what name could you give to a counter-revolution which would deprive you of liberty?”

Intense excitement reigned throughout the city. M. de Montmorin, who innocently signed the passport for the Baroness de Korff, had to seek the protec-



tion of the Assembly under an escort. The National Guards who had been on duty, and all persons known to be favorable to the court, were in great danger. For lack of other occupation, the mob soon spread over the city, erasing the royal arms and name wherever found.

The Assembly immediately took steps to assume executive functions. The deputies sent an escort to bring Lafayette to the chamber, but he declined it, on the ground that "the streets being full of people, he was never in greater safety." He had been attacked in the Assembly, but his reputation was still too much for his enemies. In the Jacobin Club, Danton, who was already in the pay of the court, declared, "The commander-general promised on his head that the king would not depart; therefore we must have the person of the king or the head of M. the commander-general." But Danton was silenced by Alexander Lameth.

The days which followed the news of the arrest of the royal family at Varennes were occupied by the Assembly in determining the new position of the king, and in providing for the executive branch of the government. At last the painful journey back came to an end. The carriage proceeded almost at a walk between unending lines of spectators, and surrounded by a cloud of dust. Two commissioners of the Assembly were crowded into the royal carriage, and one of them, the wretched Pétion, added to the horrors of the situation by his insolent familiarity.

Lafayette had prepared for the entry of the king by stationing lines of National Guards along the route to the Tuileries, which kept the crowd back. Placards were posted throughout the city, announcing that any one who applauded the king would be flogged, and any one who insulted him would be hung. Lafayette met the royal carriage at the gates, and escorted it to the Tuileries. On arriving there, his first act was to conduct inside the palace the two body-guards who had accompanied the king, in order to insure their safety from the bloodthirsty mob. The king was received by the people amid an ominous silence.

When Louis XVI. had retired to his rooms Lafayette entered and said, "Sire, your Majesty is acquainted with my personal attachment ; but I have not allowed you to be unaware that if you separated your cause from that of the people I should remain on the side of the people." — "That is true," replied the king, "you have acted according to your principles ; it is an affair of party. At present, here I am. I will tell you frankly, that up to these last days, I believed myself to be in a vortex of people of your opinion with whom you surrounded me, but that it was not the opinion of France. I have thoroughly recognized in this journey that I was mistaken, and that this opinion is the general one."<sup>1</sup> When Lafayette asked the king for his orders, Louis XVI. laughed and said, "It seems to me that I am more at your orders than you are at mine."

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<sup>1</sup> Mémoires de Lafayette : Départ et Arrestation du Roi.

Lafayette was too kind-hearted a man not to do all in his power to soften the hardships of the position of the royal family. The queen, whose proud spirit suffered far more than the easy-going nature of her husband, haughtily gave Lafayette the keys of her travelling-boxes that they might be examined ; but Lafayette refused to receive them. The orders of the Assembly indicated a particular guard for each member of the royal family. By some, this was construed to mean that the family were to be separated, but Lafayette refused to understand it in that way, saying that "when a rigorous measure was susceptible of two interpretations, he could only consider the most humane sense." Up to the time of the conclusion of the constitution, the king and his family were undisguisedly prisoners. But the outward changes in their situation were slight : Lafayette, instead of the king, gave the countersign, and the gates of the Tuileries were kept closed.

The flight of the king gave a new impetus to political ideas and passions which were destined to control the course of the Revolution and to lead it into a bloody anarchy. Thus far events had been directed largely by the *bourgeois* class, and the constitution accorded with *bourgeois* ideas. This class, as a whole, considered that the objects of the Revolution were practically attained and now wished for peace. But the working-classes, especially in Paris, felt that they had yet derived little advantage from the Revolution. The disorders of the times necessarily interfered with

trade and manufactures and kept up a condition of distress among wage-earners. This condition was taken advantage of by extremists, like Danton, Pétion, and Robespierre, to carry out their radical ideas. Through their newspapers and speeches, they disseminated the doctrine that the Revolution had done nothing for the workingman, that a republic was the only form of government that could bring prosperity and liberty, that the king, having abdicated by his flight, should now be tried and condemned like any ordinary criminal. The Jacobin Club taught and supported these ideas with all its power.

Under the auspices of this club, a petition asking the Assembly to dethrone the king was placed for signature on the "altar of the nation," erected in the Champ de Mars at the time of the Federation. The petition was exposed on the 17th of July. No opposition was made by the government to the assemblage of the people who wished to sign the petition, and had the crowd been of a decent and law-abiding character no trouble would have occurred. But the Jacobin Club brought out its supporters from the slums of Paris. They thronged the Champ de Mars in their usual bloodthirsty mood. Suddenly, while the signing was going on, a disabled soldier and a companion were found concealed beneath the altar. The cry was raised that the men had gunpowder and intended to blow up the "altar of the nation." The unhappy wretches in vain showed that they had nothing with them but their dinner. The mob had an

excuse for murder and would not be denied. In a few moments the men were torn to pieces and their heads mounted on pikes. This news being carried to the Hotel de Ville, Lafayette repaired to the place with a company of National Guards.

Now the issue between law and mob-rule was unobscured by the political notions which made Lafayette useless on the day of the journey to St. Cloud. He found a riotous gang stationed behind a barricade of wagons near the altar, one of whom fired a musket at him. The Guards charged on the wagons and seized the would-be assassin, whom Lafayette afterwards allowed to go free. Representations were then made to him that order would be preserved if he would allow the signing to go on. He agreed to this, but left a company of Guards stationed in the vicinity to keep watch. Very soon the mob became disorderly again; violent speeches were made, and the assemblage gave signs of being bent on mischief. Information of this being conveyed to the Hotel de Ville, the red flag was hoisted over that building, according to law. Lafayette and Bailly proceeded to the Champ de Mars with a detachment of National Guards. They were greeted with volleys of stones. Bailly then read the proclamation of martial law, and in accordance with it ordered the crowd to disperse. The mayor's address was received with howls and jeers. Lafayette then ordered his men to fire in the air. This having no effect, and the rioters continuing to assail the military with stones, Lafayette gave the

order to fire in earnest. Only about a dozen of the miscreants were killed, but many were injured in the cowardly flight that immediately ensued, including, of course, some comparatively innocent persons.

The conduct of the authorities had been as indulgent as possible without absolute weakness. The time had come when the government must rule or openly turn the country over to the rabble. The Assembly passed a vote of thanks to Lafayette and Bailly for their conduct, and a feeling of greater security prevailed in the respectable quarters of the city. Marat, for a time, was silenced; Robespierre and Danton realized that their day had not yet come. But the mob nursed its rage at this unexpected act of authority. Although the determined attitude of the authorities on this occasion had a beneficial effect for a time, it came too late to restore the lost respect for law. The efforts of the middle classes could not long stem the revolutionary fury which they had done so much to encourage. The mob was to have its day of power when the deaths at the Champ de Mars would be avenged.

In September, 1791, the constitution was completed and was formally accepted by the king. With his acceptance, the labors of the Constituent Assembly came to an end. Since the meeting of the States-General, more than two years before, the Assembly had found itself confronted with work of two kinds,—the destructive and the constructive. It had naturally begun with the first, and in a short time a great number of ancient

abuses were swept away. France still feels the benefit of some reforms then accomplished. But, as might have been expected with men wholly unaccustomed to public affairs, the destructive spirit had been carried much too far. Extremely democratic measures, like the abolition of titles of nobility, unsettled the social fabric without any compensating advantage. The destruction of the Church was a useless measure, productive of endless bitterness and internal strife at a time when order was all-important.

When the Assembly had destroyed the ancient monarchy and undertook to set up a new system of government, its incapacity for such a task became painfully apparent. In its disorderly, noisy chamber, deliberative business was conducted with the utmost difficulty. The Assembly was filled with deputies who had crude theories of government, derived from the works of Rousseau, which they supported with endless verbiage. Of experienced statesmanship, of calm consideration of the actual needs of the country, there was almost none. The ruling idea had been to establish a system of government as different as possible from the discarded despotism of the past. The result was the almost total destruction of royal authority or executive power, — the confiding of such power to a legislative assembly, which, from its very nature, could not exercise it. As Morris said, if the new constitution was to succeed, the Almighty would have to create a new race of men to live under it.

The Constituent Assembly, on separating, said that

it left "France, as it hoped, regenerate." And for a short time such seemed to be the case. The royal family, released from imprisonment, once more appeared in public. The new Legislative Assembly met and began its duties quietly. The act of general amnesty passed at the solicitation of Lafayette did much to restore confidence. It was generally thought that the storm of the Revolution had passed, and that France had begun again on a new and better basis. But beneath the surface smouldered fires which were soon to burst forth with unexampled fury. The revolution of the *bourgeois* was completed; the revolution of the ignorant masses was yet to take place, and to conduct the country through blood and ruin to a military despotism.

To Lafayette's mind the future was bright. The dream of his life had been to see personal liberty and a constitutional monarchy established in France, and now the dream seemed to be realized. In the beginning of the Revolution he had declared, in reply to accusations of selfish ambition, that he held his powerful office of commander of the National Guards only to preserve order until the completion of the constitution. Now, in pursuance of this declaration, he resigned his commission and retired to private life. The municipality voted him a medal and a marble statute of Washington, and ordered that the vote should be inscribed on the bust which the State of Virginia had given to the city twelve years before. The National Guard presented Lafayette with a sword



forged from the bolts of the Bastille. His journey to Chavaniac was a continuous ovation. The militia and the people lined the route to do honor to the man who had labored so unselfishly for his country, and now willingly resigned his power to become again a private citizen.

Thus, amid a general, and on the whole well-deserved, applause, Lafayette terminated his career as commander of the National Guard. During his tenure of that office he had been the most powerful individual in France, and he had never used his great power for any end other than the public good as he conscientiously understood it. He was probably the only man who could have commanded the Guards with success. Unmindful of discipline, independent in spirit, resenting authority as a sign of despotism, only his tact and popularity could have kept them up to their duty; and under his leadership was maintained a condition of order very creditable, considering the circumstances. In the popular mind liberty meant license, and authority in any form was hateful. Yet Lafayette generally succeeded in maintaining the laws. The events of the 5th and 6th of October were beyond the control of any man, and the National Guard was not yet sufficiently disciplined to be of the least service. The murders of Foulon, of Berthier, and of the baker François cannot justly be ascribed to remissness on Lafayette's part. His vigilance had nipped in the bud a great number of outbreaks. His failure to insure by force the king's journey to St.

Cloud is the only instance where he did not see and perform what was undoubtedly his duty. His services to the public had been entirely disinterested. When he resigned his office, he had not only received no compensation, but even no remuneration for his personal outlays. He retired with a depleted fortune and an unspotted name.

When we consider his political conduct and opinions, so much in his favor cannot be said. The intention was always good, but the judgment was frequently at fault. He failed to perceive the dangers resulting from the too sudden acquisition of liberty by a people unaccustomed to it. He failed to appreciate the necessity of giving real authority to the executive branch of the government. He adopted too readily democratic ideas which were unfitted for the character of the people. Thus he must share the blame for bringing on his country the great disasters which followed. The stern old royalist, the Marquis de Bouillé, Lafayette's cousin and political enemy, thus estimated his character: "He never was, I repeat, a bad man; but the enthusiasm for liberty with which he became intoxicated in America, an immoderate thirst for glory, joined to philanthropic sentiments which exalted his soul, directed his qualities toward dangerous objects."

The demonstrations of popular regard which had so far attended Lafayette's career might have deceived even a more discerning man as to the actual extent of his influence. It was natural for him to suppose that

his own popularity indicated that of the principles which he represented. He thus acquired an altogether mistaken view of the state of France and of the measures needful for her good. On resigning his military command, he expressed himself on the situation as follows : —

“Do not believe that every kind of despotism has been destroyed, and that because liberty is constituted and cherished among us, it is already sufficiently established. Such would not be the case, if, from one end of the country to the other, everything that the law did not forbid were not permitted ; if the movements of persons and the circulation of provisions and money met with any impediment ; if men placed on trial could be protected against the law ; if the people, neglecting their most precious duty and most sacred debt, were neither prompt in taking part in elections, nor exact in paying their public contributions ; if arbitrary opposition, the fruit of disorder or mistrust, paralyzed the legal action of legitimate authority ; if political opinions or personal sentiments, if, above all, the sacred use of the freedom of the press, could ever serve as a pretext for violence ; if the intolerance of religious opinion, covering itself with a cloak of false patriotism, dared to sanction the idea of a dominant worship ; if the house of each citizen were not for him an asylum more inviolable than the most impregnable fortress ; finally, if all Frenchmen did not believe themselves jointly responsible for the maintenance of their civil liberty as for their political liberty, and for

the religious execution of the law ; and if there were not in the voice of a magistrate speaking in the name of the law a force ever superior to that of the millions of hands armed to defend it."

This high and yet reasonable interpretation of the advantages and responsibilities of liberty does credit to Lafayette's personal position, and shows how excellent were the principles which he had sought to establish. But when he expressed his belief that such a social condition as he described was then possible in France, he displayed a blind confidence in human nature, an ignorance of the needs, shortcomings, and intrinsic instability of his countrymen. Soon after his arrival at Chavaniac, he replied to an address of a deputation of the National Guard : " You see me restored to the place of my birth ; I shall leave it only to defend or consolidate our common liberty, if attacked, and I hope to remain here for long." But Lafayette's idea of liberty, derived from a race grown old amid free institutions, was in France an exotic. His more intelligent hearers might agree to his generalizations, but they could not put them into practice. As to the masses of the people, they had no higher conception of liberty than the absence of authority. Lafayette was fond of saying, that " for a nation to be free, it is only necessary that it should determine to be so." But France had shown plainly enough that she had not the qualities by which freedom is maintained. Passion, ignorance, and violence prevailed over reason and law. The volatile nature

of the people demanded incessant changes, and rushed thoughtlessly into extremes. The constitution which had been formed without regard to the experience of other nations, or even to the characteristics of human nature, gave free scope to mob-rule, the worst despotism of all.

## CHAPTER III.

Lafayette called from Retirement to command an Army. — His Campaign. — Decline of the Constitutional Party and Rise of Jacobin Power. — Lafayette's Letter. — The 20th of June. — Lafayette returns to Paris to support King and Constitution. — The 10th of August. — Jacobin Supremacy. — Imprisonment of the King. — Lafayette rejects Jacobin Overtures and leaves France. — End of his Revolutionary Career.

DURING the last two months of 1791, Lafayette enjoyed a much-needed repose in the midst of his family. Mme. de Chavaniac, the Duchesse d'Ayen, and the Vicomtesse de Noailles joined the party at Chavaniac. Mme. de Lafayette was happy to find herself with her husband and children, far from the dangers of the Revolution. For two years she had seldom seen the general leave the house without fearing that he would never return.

Through these trials she had been sustained by the courage and piety which distinguished her character. She had materially aided her husband to maintain his position by the unfailing welcome which she had extended to the guests of every shade of opinion who crowded his table and thronged his *salon*. Only once had she opposed his course, and that occasion involved her religious scruples. Conscientiously disapproving the clerical oath, she gave her open support to the non-juring clergy; and when the new

bishop of Paris, who had taken the oath, was invited in his official capacity to the table of the commander of the National Guard, Mme. de Lafayette dined out. The children, now emerging from childhood, were all in good health. Anastasie, born while her father was at Valley Forge, was the eldest. The only son, George Washington, came next. The youngest, Virginia, was named after the State in which her father had gained his military laurels. In this short period, Lafayette enjoyed the only domestic life which he was destined to know for many years.

While he was thus employed, events were rapidly drifting toward that great conflict which was destined to change the face of Europe and to drench its soil with blood.

The Legislative Assembly of France, which began its work in October, 1791, was extremely ill-fitted for the work before it. The Constituent Assembly, in a mistaken spirit of self-denial, had precluded the re-election of any of its own members. Thus the new representatives were totally inexperienced in public affairs, and very anxious to try their hands at building up a Utopia. Instead of coming together with the purpose of regulating the affairs of the country on the basis of the newly adopted constitution, a large proportion of the deputies detested the constitution which they had sworn to uphold, as not sufficiently democratic, and resolved to supplant it by a more radical system. A moderate and gifted portion of the Assembly, called the Gironde, was the only support

of the existing order. Thus, with a court party and a violent popular party, hating each other, but both united in the effort to subvert the constitutional monarchy, anarchy grew nearer with each day.

The court was still unalterably opposed to the Revolution in every particular; and its partisans, thinking that the constitution might endure to the detriment of the king's power, while the radical projects must fail through their absurdity, deliberately supported the worst men and measures that the revolutionists brought forward. Thus, when Lafayette was nominated by the constitutionalists as mayor of Paris, against Pétion, the radical candidate, the court party assisted to elect the latter, although he had grossly insulted the royal family on their return from Varennes and was noted as a chronic disturber of the worst type. The priests, whose new organization was hateful to them, were the cause of ceaseless disorders all over the kingdom, for which their opponents rather than themselves were responsible. The conscientious support which Louis XVI. gave to the priests who refused to take the new oath imbittered the suspicion and hatred with which he was now regarded. Therefore, the clergy and the nobility were the enemies of both constitutionalists and republicans. The republicans hated the constitutionalists as much as they did the court party. The supporters of the constitution found themselves ever growing weaker. Meanwhile, the common people, to whom the Revolution had brought little visible benefit, were clamoring for greater and



more radical changes. While France was distracted by these internal dissensions, an outer influence added new violence to the already warring elements.

Hanging like a threatening cloud on the frontiers of France were the bands of noble emigrants who had fled from the Revolution. They filled the towns across the border, under the leadership of the king's brothers, uttering violent protests against everything that was done in France, and urging foreign powers to aid them to destroy the new government and to punish its leaders. The Assembly passed the most severe laws against the persons and property of the emigrants. Louis XVI. refused to sanction these, and thus gave the impression that he was secretly in sympathy with the emigrants, — an impression which added hatred of the man to the already general hatred of royalty. In August, the King of Prussia and the Emperor of Austria met the Comte d'Artois and the Marquis de Bouillé at Pilnitz. There a coalition against France was formed, the allied sovereigns adopting the cause of Louis XVI. as their own. From this beginning the preparations for foreign interference progressed through the autumn of 1791. The emigrants, with their threats of punishment, excited the revolutionists of France to frenzy, and immeasurably strengthened the hands of the extremists by making them appear the defenders of the national soil. Before separating, the Constituent Assembly had voted, on motion of Lafayette, a general amnesty, which allowed the emigrants to return to France and to enjoy all rights granted by the consti-

tution. But they still kept up their attitude of hostility, and now, furious at the acceptance of the constitution by the king, thought only of war against their country. The Assembly finally passed a decree that the French princes should be considered guilty of treason unless they returned to France before January, 1792. As the king vetoed this decree, although he personally summoned his brothers to submit, the popular anger against himself increased, while the continued preparations on the frontier made it evident that a war was imminent.

On the 6th of December, Narbonne was made Minister of War, and soon after the king announced to the Assembly that he had informed foreign powers that if they continued to allow the assemblage of hostile bodies of men on the French frontiers, he would resort to force. Narbonne then announced the formation of three armies of fifty thousand men each, and declared that the country's choice for commanding generals were Rochambeau, Luckner, and Lafayette. To these arrangements the Assembly agreed.

Lafayette came up to Paris at once from Chavaniac, paid his respects to Louis XVI., and then presenting himself at the bar of the Assembly, thanked the deputies for his appointment, and declared his *unalterable devotion to the maintenance and defence of the constitution*. The president replied that "the French people, which has sworn to conquer or to die in the cause of liberty, will always confidently present to nations and to tyrants *the constitution and Lafayette*."

The words used on this occasion are important in view of subsequent events. They show that Lafayette derived his appointment from the king and the Assembly under the constitution, and that he was bound to support and obey the constitution under all circumstances.

Lafayette's departure from Paris for the frontiers was attended by the usual demonstrations of confidence on the part of the people and the National Guards. It was the last manifestation of popular regard that he was to receive from revolutionary France. Before leaving Paris he had been careful to call at the Tuileries to pay his respects to the king, on which occasion the court declared that he so acted only with a view to triumph over them, while the Jacobins everywhere announced that he had turned courtier. At Metz, where he met Rochambeau, Luckner, and Narbonne, it was arranged that the three generals should take post respectively at Liège, Trèves, and Coblenz, the chief resorts of the emigrants. But the coalition, somewhat awed by these preparations for war, directed the Elector of Trèves to submit to French demands, and the gathering of hostile troops on the frontier was stopped for the time. In the beginning of January, 1792, Lafayette took advantage of the postponement of hostilities to prepare his raw recruits for the coming struggle.

Utter demoralization and lack of discipline characterized the armies which France now put forward to defend herself. From 1789, the breaking up of the

old military system had steadily progressed. Two thousand officers had already abandoned their commands, and had fled across the frontier. Of the aristocratic officers who remained, many were merely awaiting a favorable opportunity to desert, while the remainder were too much distrusted by the men to attain real authority. The soldiers themselves were carried away with the new ideas of liberty, looked upon military discipline as a tyranny from which they were emancipated, and thought that they could show their freedom best by being unruly and insolent. So many general officers had left the country, or from their aristocratic character were incapable of commanding the men in their present condition, that Rochambeau, Luckner, and Lafayette were almost the only prominent military men that the Assembly could call upon.

Rochambeau was a distinguished officer, who had seen active service in the Seven Years' War, and had assisted Washington at Yorktown. Luckner was of German origin, and had been brought into the French army by the Duc de Choiseul in 1763, after he had made a reputation in the Seven Years' War. Both of these generals were discouraged with the armies which they were now called upon to command. Lafayette's youth and sanguine temper caused him to take a more hopeful view. On account of his great personal popularity he was able to enforce a more severe discipline than his colleagues as yet dared. Recalling his experiences in the republican armies of America, he appealed to the patriotism of the men, and was successful in im-

proving their condition. At this time he introduced into the army the mounted artillery which he had seen in Germany before the Revolution.

Lafayette had accomplished some good results in favor of discipline, when the three generals were summoned to Paris by the Minister of War to consult on the plan of campaign. At Paris all parties were at odds and hopelessly divided. The king dismissed Narbonne, who had shown himself an excellent minister of war, and appointed Dumouriez in his place.

Having returned to Metz, Lafayette found awaiting him an important decree of the Assembly. This decree declared "infamous and a traitor, guilty of high treason, every Frenchman who takes part directly or indirectly in a project of which the aim should be a modification of the constitution or a mediation with the rebels." The Assembly itself had taken an oath to support this decree, and the same oath was administered to all public officers. Lafayette, in accordance with his orders, published the decree in his army. Thus again was Lafayette bound to support the constitution, and he remembered his obligations when the Assembly labored to destroy what it had so often and so solemnly sworn to support.

In April, Dumouriez appeared before the king's council, summed up the insults heaped upon the French by foreigners and the hostile plots of the emigrants, and on the 20th of the month war was declared.

The plan of campaign directed Lafayette to pro-

ceed against the Netherlands, marching from Metz to Givet, and thence to Namur. One division under General Dillon was ordered to march from Lille to attack Tournay, while another under General de Biron was to leave Rochambeau's headquarters at Valenciennes to take possession of Mons and then to attack Brussels. Lafayette was to support these divisions.

General Biron marched from Rochambeau's headquarters and made his attack on the Austrians; but his distrust of his officers and men caused such indecision in his orders that a panic speedily ensued among the men, aggravated by cries of "We are betrayed!" uttered by aristocratic officers who wished for defeat. The division retreated in utter rout, losing all its tents, cannon, and ammunition, fell back on Valenciennes, and was only saved from total destruction by the support sent out by Rochambeau. The other division, under General Dillon, no sooner appeared before Tournay than it was vigorously attacked by the garrison of the place. Such was the lack of confidence and discipline among the French troops, that at the first charge of the enemy they turned and fled back to Lille. The troops, overcome with shame at their own conduct, and filled with suspicion of their officers, during the flight attacked General Dillon in a barn in which he had taken refuge, murdered him, and burned him in the building. The sanguinary spirit of rebellion then developed continued after the arrival of the retreating troops at Lille. There the populace joined the mutinous soldiers, and hung an

artillery officer, six Austrian prisoners of war, and a non-juring priest.

When Lafayette arrived at Givet after a rapid march, he was informed of the failure of the movement he had been directed to support. This miserable opening of hostilities and the conduct of the soldiers so discouraged Rochambeau that he resigned his commission. The territory to be defended was then divided between Luckner and Lafayette. The latter concentrated his troops at Maubeuge, and for the rest of May the hostile armies were occupied only with skirmishes.

While these unpropitious events were occurring on the frontier, the situation at Paris had changed greatly for the worse. The Assembly was divided up into parties bitterly opposed to each other, and the worst elements were obtaining control. The extreme party, who wished to upset the constitution, dethrone the king, and establish a republic, was becoming daily more powerful. This party was sustained by the Jacobin Club, which was surely setting itself up as the real government of the country. By forming branch clubs all over France, subject to the parent society in Paris, it obtained enormous power, which it used to overawe the Assembly and to dictate its course. In the Jacobin debates, the most sanguinary projects were applauded, and the leaders of the Reign of Terror were completing their plans. To the dictation of the clubs the Assembly weakly submitted, and the functions of the French government were being rapidly

transferred from king and Assembly to the most violent Jacobin orators.

Throughout France, a demoralization prevailed which gave immunity to murder and robbery. Partisan fury became such that the most fearful massacres passed unnoticed by the authorities. The infamous band of assassins under Jourdan, who committed the wholesale murders at Anjou, were not only pardoned by the Assembly, but feasted as deserving patriots. Wretches like Marat, who daily printed their bloody exhortations, were considered the noblest teachers of the people. The streets of Paris were filled with the lowest ruffians, armed with pikes, who executed the murderous bidding of the clubs. The National Guard, which, under Lafayette, had been so useful in the preservation of order, was now practically destroyed by reconstruction. Lafayette has been blamed and scoffed at for having filled the ranks of the Guard with *bourgeois*; but his wisdom in confiding the maintenance of order to those who had a direct interest in its preservation was now demonstrated. Pétion, the new mayor, and his unscrupulous party were careful to reorganize the Guard, to fill its ranks with poverty-stricken adventurers, and to give it officers who were ready to second the destructive plans of the Jacobin Club.

Meanwhile, the relations of the king and the Assembly were becoming more hostile. The deputies, in their desire to show their "liberty," treated Louis XVI. with vulgar insolence, and he retaliated with open contempt. The Assembly passed new decrees against



the emigrants and priests, which the king refused to sanction. The spirit of enmity between the court and the legislature was fostered by the Jacobins, who intended to utilize it for their own ends. The well-known favor with which Marie Antoinette regarded the emigrants, and her hopes of deliverance by invasion, intensified the suspicion and hatred with which the throne was now regarded by the populace. The constitutional monarchy was rapidly falling to pieces. The defeats of the French armies on the frontier seemed to leave the country open to new disasters from without. Uncertainty and terror became universal. Morris wrote to Jefferson on the 10th of June, 1792, "The best picture I can give of the French people is that of cattle before a thunder-storm." And again, a week later, "We stand on a vast volcano; we feel it tremble and we hear it roar; but how and where and when it will burst, and who may be destroyed by its irruption, are beyond the ken of mortal foresight to discover."

Lafayette, in camp at Maubeuge, alarmed at the accounts which he received from Paris, saw that the cause of liberty and order would soon be lost unless an effective blow could be dealt at the power of the Jacobins. In Paris, the Assembly was overawed by the club, the respectable portions of the community dared not oppose so formidable and relentless a body. Lafayette believed that if some one would take the lead in braving the vengeance of the club, that the better class in the Assembly and the public would

take heart to oppose it. Accordingly, on the 16th of June, he wrote and sent to the Assembly the famous letter in which he urged the deputies to throw off the vicious despotism which controlled them. "Can you hide from yourselves," he said, "that a faction, and, to avoid vague terms, the Jacobite faction, has caused all these disorders? It is this club that I openly accuse. Organized like a separate empire in its capital and affiliations, blindly directed by a few ambitious chiefs, this sect forms a distinct corporation in the midst of the French people, of which it usurps the powers by subjugating its representatives and officers. In the public meetings of that club, the love of law is called *aristocracy*, and its violation, *patriotism*. There the assassins of Désilles are received in triumph, the crimes of Jourdan find panegyrists; there the recital of the murder which has stained the city of Metz has just excited infernal applause. . . . Let the reign of the clubs, destroyed by you, give place to the reign of law; let their usurpations give place to the firm and independent control of constituted authorities; their disorganizing maxims, to the true principles of liberty; their delirious fury, to the calm and constant courage of a nation which knows its rights and defends them. Finally, let their sectarian plots be succeeded by the true interests of the country, which in this moment of danger ought to reunite all those to whom its enthrallment and its ruin are not objects of an atrocious rejoicing, and of an infamous speculation." To his exposure of the Jaco-

bins, Lafayette added an exhortation to the Assembly to be true to the constitution and the king.

Such a letter, of both reproof and advice, to the chief legislature of a nation from one of its generals in the field would have been received with indignation in another country and under other circumstances. But the Assembly which allowed the lowest rabble of the city to dictate its votes from the galleries, and extended the honors of the sitting to every murderer who sheltered his crimes under a mask of patriotism, could not consistently object to an address by a prominent officer, however unpleasantly true. But Lafayette's courageous attempt to save the Assembly and to arouse an opposition to the fatal tyranny of the Jacobins could not stem the destructive torrent which was sweeping over France.

When the letter was read to the Assembly, the Jacobins attacked it furiously, accusing Lafayette of attempting to use his military power to control the Legislature, and intimating that he was about to make himself a dictator. But the force of Lafayette's attack, and the undeniable truth of his allegations, so disconcerted them that they dared not yet take active measures against a man who possessed in such a degree the confidence of the country. Lafayette's friends in the Assembly justified the letter, both as regards the truth of its statements and the motives which prompted its composition, when they declared that a general whose devotion to his country had been proved by years of unpaid services had as much right to express

his views to the Assembly as the irresponsible mobs who daily interrupted its deliberations. The Jacobins could find no reply ; but they now saw in Lafayette the chief obstacle to the plans they were forming for the destruction of the constitutional monarchy. They dared not yet proceed against him in the Assembly, and to gain time denied that the letter was the production of Lafayette, and succeeded in having it referred to a committee which should ascertain its authenticity.

Then, through their clubs, newspapers, and street orators, they attacked Lafayette furiously as an aristocrat and an enemy of the people. The universal distrust and suspicion which prevailed gave the Jacobins an enormous advantage over their absent adversary. The ignorant and fickle populace was ready to believe anything. Their former idol soon became the object of execration. More intelligent people knew well that French liberty had no more faithful friend than Lafayette ; but the vast majority of Parisians had come to detest the constitutional monarchy, and now that Lafayette had taken so unqualified a position in its support, they were ready to assist in his overthrow. The Girondist party, who should have assisted Lafayette in his warfare against anarchy, played into the hands of the Jacobins, because they themselves wished to change the constitution that they had several times sworn to maintain inviolate. In fact, an altogether new revolution was now in progress, of which Lafayette was the enemy. The movement of 1789 had for its object

the destruction of ancient abuses and the establishment of a constitution. As we have seen, Lafayette had been a strenuous supporter of that movement, and had staked his life and property on its result. A new movement now sought to destroy that constitution, and to set up in its place a republic. Just as the adherents of the old *régime* had been hated and driven from the country in 1789, so now the adherents of the constitution found their lives in danger. Of these Lafayette was the most prominent. His principles were becoming the object of opprobrium under the name of "Fayettism," and all who shared them were soon to be as much proscribed as the emigrants across the frontier.

Soon after the reception of Lafayette's letter, the political situation was brought to a crisis by the king's dismissal of the ministry. The ministers had proposed to the Assembly a new law against the non-juring priests, and a proposition to establish a camp of twenty thousand volunteers in the vicinity of Paris to serve as the nucleus for the enlistment of a large army. Both measures were passed by the Assembly almost unanimously. The king objected to the first from motives of conscience; and to the second, because it seemed very dangerous to have so large a body of irregular military near the city at a time of such excitement. Dumouriez himself, the Minister of War, had strenuously opposed the project of the camp, and only gave his adhesion to it in order to preserve his influence with the Assembly. The king vetoed both

measures. However repugnant they were to him, it was still the worst policy thus to bring about a direct conflict between himself and the Legislature at a time when his crown and his person were the objects of popular hatred, when it was generally asserted that the external enemies of France were aided by an "Austrian committee" within the Tuileries, and when even the semblance of royal authority had been taken away. But Louis XVI. had suffered too much and had been too ill repaid for his concessions to yield any further. He vetoed the bills and dismissed Dumouriez's ministry, which, as a body, had done all it could to humiliate and insult him.

The storm of anger provoked by this action gave the Jacobins the opportunity they desired to degrade the throne and then to overthrow it. Then practically began the Reign of Terror; that is, the employment of violence and fear to bring about the measures desired by the populace. The leaders in the Assembly, controlled by the Jacobins, prepared to strike such a blow at the court that no opposition to their wishes could remain. Pétion, Danton, and Santerre organized and armed the swarms of beggars that infested the city. The populace was excited by inflammatory publications and speeches, which taught that all crimes were laudable when committed in the name of liberty and patriotism. Crowds of ruffians were admitted nightly to the galleries of the Assembly to overawe the minority by their threats of personal violence. But the Jacobins, although the prime movers in the

contemplated overthrow of the constitutional monarchy, were not alone responsible for that result. That portion of the Assembly known as the Gironde, and nearly all the more conservative deputies, infuriated at the dismissal of the ministry, and anxious to make radical changes in the constitution, gave a passive coöperation to the schemes of the extreme revolutionists. As in 1789 there had been no opposition to temper the course of innovation, so in 1792 there was no conservative party to restrain the efforts of the men who sought to destroy the results of 1789.

When public fury had been wrought up to a sufficient pitch, the 20th of June, the anniversary of the Tennis Court Oath, was seized upon as a favorable opportunity to strike the blow. Under the pretence of planting a liberty-pole in the gardens, the rabble of the Faubourgs St. Antoine and St. Marceau, male and female, armed with pikes, were assembled and set in motion under the guidance of Santerre and St. Huruge, already distinguished as skilful mob-leaders. The squalid and vicious crowd was first admitted to the Assembly, where it was permitted to wave its red flags, to utter its imprecations against the king, and to applaud the Jacobins. It was then led to the Tuileries, where the gates had been purposely left open and the National Guards, themselves debauched, without orders. The mob surged through the palace, abusing all who were found there, singing the "*Ça ira*" and yelling, "Down with the Austrian woman!" "Down

with the veto." The doors of the royal apartments were broken open. The queen, with the Princess Elizabeth and the children, fled to an inner room, where, behind a barricade of chairs and surrounded by a few grenadiers, for three hours they watched the ragged and vicious band march by, and submitted calmly to the ribald taunts directed at them. When the mob attacked the king's door, he opened it with the question, "What do you want?" He was answered by furious cries of "No veto!" "Patriot ministers!" He replied that this was neither the time nor the place to present such demands. Retiring to the embrasure of a window with a few grenadiers he stood unmoved while the procession of the *sans-culottes* passed by. A liberty cap was handed him, which he put on his head. When this scene had lasted for three hours, when the Jacobin leaders concluded that the king was sufficiently warned against using his constitutional right of veto, and when royalty was thoroughly degraded in the eyes of the populace, Pétion, the mayor, appeared, and led the mob from the palace.

Napoleon Bonaparte, then an impecunious lieutenant, was dining in the Palais Royal with his friend Bourrienne when the mob attacked the Tuileries. Taking up a position on the banks of the Seine, he witnessed with extreme indignation the scene which ensued. When he saw the king in the window wearing the red cap, he exclaimed, "Why have they let in all that rabble? They should sweep off four or five hundred of them with cannon; the rest would then set



off fast enough." But the time for Bonaparte and his cannon had not yet arrived.

When Lafayette heard of the scandalous events of the 20th of June, he resolved to go in person to Paris to contend against the anarchic forces which were now boldly arrayed against the constitutional monarchy. The letter which he had written to the Assembly, urging obedience to the constitution and resistance to the Jacobin faction, had been answered by a worse outrage than he had predicted. He sent his aide-de-camp, Bureaux de Pusy, to Luckner's headquarters to inquire if the marshal knew of any military objection to his journey to Paris. The marshal replied that Lafayette's absence would do no injury to the army, as no movements were contemplated ; but warned him that if the Jacobins got him in their power they would cut off his head. Lafayette put his army in safety under the guns of Maubeuge, and arrived at his friend La Rochefoucauld's house in Paris, entirely unexpected, on the 28th of June.

The news of the general's arrival spread immediately through the city, and created great excitement. When he appeared at the bar of the Assembly, the hall was filled with members and the galleries with Jacobin supporters. Lafayette began his speech by saying that he had taken such precautions that his temporary absence could inflict no injury on his army. He then declared that some persons having denied the authenticity of his letter of the 16th of June, and others having reproached him for having written it in

the midst of a camp, he now, to acknowledge that letter, presented himself alone, without the honorable protection of his troops. He said that the violence committed at the Tuileries had excited the indignation of all good citizens, and had forced him to come to Paris to protest against such occurrences. "Gentlemen," he continued, "it is as a citizen that I have the honor of addressing you ; but the opinion that I express is that of all Frenchmen who love their country, its liberty, its repose, the laws which they have made for themselves ; and I do not fear to be disavowed by any one of them. It is time to protect the constitution from attack, to assure the freedom of the National Assembly, that of the king, and his independence and dignity. It is time to put an end to the hopes of bad citizens, who await from the hands of foreigners the reëstablishment of what they call the public tranquillity, which would be for freemen a shameful and intolerable slavery. I beg the National Assembly, first, to ordain that the instigators and the chiefs of the violences committed on the 20th of June at the Tuileries be followed up and punished as treasonable criminals ; secondly, to destroy a sect which invades the national sovereignty, tyrannizes over citizens, and of which the public debates leave no doubt of the atrocity of those who direct it ; thirdly, I presume to beg you, in my name, and in the name of all the respectable people of the kingdom, to take efficacious measures to make all constituted authorities respected, particularly your own and that of the king, and to

give to the army the assurance that the constitution will receive no attack from within the country while brave Frenchmen are shedding their blood to defend it on the frontiers."

To this address the president replied: "The National Assembly has sworn to maintain the constitution. Faithful to its oath, it will know how to protect it from every attack; you are accorded the honors of the sitting."

It is sufficient commentary on the utter lack of faith and honesty which prevailed in France, that the president could thus refer to the oaths which the Assembly had taken at the very moment when nearly every deputy was determined to violate those oaths, and by fair means or foul to overthrow the constitution. When the president accorded to Lafayette the honors of the sitting, the Jacobins on the floor and in the galleries protested loudly, and Lafayette made no attempt to avail himself of the privilege.

A deputy named Gaudet then rose, sarcastically inquired whether the enemies of the State had been destroyed, bitterly upbraided Lafayette for leaving the army to interfere with the work of the Assembly, and ended by moving that the Minister of War be directed to state whether the general had received a leave of absence. This speech was loudly applauded by the Jacobins. Then a deputy named Ramond replied on behalf of Lafayette: "When, but a few days ago, an armed multitude presented itself in this hall, no inquiry was made regarding its errand; it was not

accused of violating, by the parade of arms, the independence of the Assembly. But when M. de Lafayette, who is for America and for Europe the standard of liberty, — when he presents himself, suspicions are awakened ! If there are two weights and two measures, if there are two ways of considering things, let it be allowable to make some distinction in favor of the eldest son of liberty !” Ramond then moved that Lafayette’s address be referred to a committee.

The outrage of June 20, while it had accomplished its purpose of striking terror into the hearts of the court party, and of degrading the throne in the eyes of the people, had yet excited much indignation among the more respectable classes, and had caused a reaction in the king’s favor. It was to this reaction that Lafayette owed his safety for the time. The Assembly was not prepared to punish the champion of law and order, and adopted Ramond’s motion. But the reference of Lafayette’s address to a committee meant its total failure. The conservative element, whom he had hoped to rally to vigorous effort, could and would do nothing but preserve him from the fury of the Jacobins. In the Assembly, the constitutional monarchy was doomed.

From the Assembly, Lafayette went to the Tuileries, where he had an interview with the royal family. Madame Elizabeth and a portion of the court were inclined to forget past differences and to receive the general’s proffers of assistance. But Marie Antoinette, who hated Lafayette for the part he had taken in the

Revolution, refused to receive any aid at his hands ; and the poor king, foreseeing new dangers from the Jacobin ascendancy, declared that he saw no safety but in reliance on the constitution.

When Lafayette left the Tuileries, he was accompanied home by a considerable band of the National Guards who had formerly been under his command. These men followed his carriage with cries of "Vive Lafayette ! Down with the Jacobins !" and planted a liberty-pole before his house. Having failed with the Assembly and with the court in his efforts to stem the Jacobin tide, Lafayette determined to seek the aid of the National Guards, whom he imagined to be the same as when he commanded them. Hearing that the next morning the king was to review four thousand of these, he informed Louis XVI. that if allowed to address the Guards at the review, he hoped to be able to win them over, and with their help to subdue the clubs. But before the appointed hour for the review, Pétion craftily countermanded it. Lafayette, still retaining some reliance on the Feuillants—the old constitutional party,—and on the National Guards, appointed a meeting at his house, at which he endeavored to form a party which would help him to break up by force the Jacobin organization. At the first meeting only about a hundred individuals appeared, and it was decided to postpone definite action until the next day, when a larger attendance was expected ; but only thirty appeared at the second meeting. To the gatherings at his house Lafayette

had demonstrated the absolute necessity of united action on the part of respectable people against the threatened anarchy, and he foretold the terrible results which must ensue from the triumph of the Jacobins. All the persons present agreed with him. But such was the universal lack of confidence in king, constitution, and individuals, so hopeless had become the tangle of parties and theories, that none would take any decided stand, and nearly every man who was present at Lafayette's house was afterwards beheaded by the Jacobins, whom they then failed to oppose.

Seeing that organized resistance to Jacobin usurpation was impossible, Lafayette desired at least that some mark of public disapproval should be placed on the riot of the 20th of June. At his solicitation, his friend La Rochefoucauld, the president of the municipal department, procured the suspension from office of Pétion. But two days afterwards the Assembly annulled this measure, and reinstated Pétion, thus practically approving his acts and giving a sanction to insurrection, which soon led to yet worse calamities.

On the 30th of June, Lafayette left Paris and returned to the army. He had made every effort within his power to ward off the anarchy which he saw approaching and to save the king. But the revolution which he had encouraged and led had now gone far beyond him, and would not be checked in its course. By allying himself with the Jacobins, he might have preserved power for himself; but true to the princi-

ples of constitutional liberty which he had espoused in 1789, he had not hesitated to sacrifice all his popularity and to place his life in immediate danger. Hardly had he left the city when the liberty-pole before his house was torn down, his effigy publicly burned, his character fiercely assailed in every Jacobin meeting, and the principles he had upheld consigned to execration.

As the month of July wore on, the situation of affairs in Paris became more alarming, and Lafayette resolved to make one more attempt to save the king from his enemies. He believed that the provincial population were still attached to the king and constitution, and if given the opportunity would declare in their favor. In the movements of troops then going on, Lafayette would march by a town called La Capelle, which was about twenty miles from Compiègne, one of the royal country residences. Compiègne was within the limit prescribed by the constitution for the free movements of the king. Lafayette's plan was that the king should go to the Assembly and announce his intention of passing a few days at Compiègne. Arrived at that place, Lafayette should surround him with his most trusty troops, and there, in a position of independence, Louis XVI. should forbid his brothers and their foreign allies to cross the frontier, should declare himself ready to march against them, and should reaffirm his fidelity to the constitution. Such a declaration, made when free from the terrorizing influence of Paris, would probably create so good an impression in his

favor that suspicion would be disarmed and the populace convinced that the king was not in league with foreign enemies. Louis XVI. might then return to Paris in possession of sufficient popular confidence to enable him to remain on the throne.

Lafayette communicated his plan to the court, and it was considered for some days. But whatever the merits of the plan, the condition of the court was such that no decisive action could be resolved upon. The king was afraid to declare himself the enemy of his brothers, and preferred to await the issue of events. The queen would have nothing to do with Lafayette, whose constitutional ideas she detested, and she preferred to rely for deliverance on the success of the now imminent foreign invasion. The courtiers declared that the general would no doubt save the king, but he would not save "royalty," which meant aristocratic privileges. The last chance for withdrawing the king from his overwhelming dangers was lost. It became known that Lafayette had been in communication with the king, and this news gave the Jacobins a formidable opportunity to still further attack the general's character. He was openly accused in the Assembly of having conspired to march on Paris with his army. Lafayette denied this by letter, and was supported by Luckner. His aide-de-camp, Bureaux de Pusy, who repudiated these accusations against his chief, narrowly escaped being murdered by the Jacobin mob.

During the month of July, the constituted authorities of France became continually weaker, and disor-



ganization increased on all sides, except among the Jacobins, who formed the only party having a definite end in view. The Assembly still contained a nominal majority in favor of the existing order, and even as late as the 7th of July took another sensational oath to support the constitution. But the deputies knew not where to turn nor how to cope with their difficulties. However often and passionately they might swear to stand by the constitution, they could not live under it. The constitution would not work; the country could not be governed in accordance with it. While the Girondist orators of the Assembly were making eloquent speeches, while many deputies were meeting in private to concert some measures which could bring about some degree of harmony, the extreme minority had full scope to perfect their plans for the overthrow of the monarchy. The municipal government of the city was under the control of the Jacobin Club. Pétion, Danton, and their friends filled the ranks of the National Guards with the ruffians in their pay. The rabble was armed with pikes, and kept in readiness for the opportunity. On the 14th of July, when the anniversary of the famous oath of the Federation was celebrated, the king reviewed guards who were ready to tear his crown from his head, and drove through armed crowds who saluted him with no cries but "La Nation!" "Pétion!" "Death!" This was the time that Lafayette had planned to take the king to Compiègne and surround him with loyal troops. But Louis XVI. did not ap-

preciate the dangers which surrounded him, and the eyes of Marie Antoinette looked for aid only from the foreign armies which hung on the frontier.

At the end of July occurred the event which was needed to precipitate the catastrophe. The allied armies of Austria and Prussia, accompanied by a great number of noble French exiles, crossed the frontier and began the long-threatened invasion. The Duke of Brunswick, the general in command, issued a manifesto, in which he ordered Paris "to submit to its king," declared that if any harm came to the royal family, the city would be "razed to the earth;" that the "Legislative Assembly, the National Guards, and the municipal authorities would be held responsible for whatever occurred, to military courts-martial, without hope of pardon." The French people, thus insolently summoned to obedience to hated foreign invaders, were informed that "their Austrian and Prussian Majesties would use their good offices with his most Christian Majesty to obtain forgiveness for his rebellious subjects." The effect of this fatally ill-judged proclamation was increased by the shouts of triumph and the threats of vengeance uttered by the French nobles who intended to take part in the projected subjugation of their country.

The French people, always highly patriotic and attached to the national soil, were speedily wrought up to a boundless fury. The Duke of Brunswick's proclamation, intended to overawe the populace until the arrival of the allied armies, had exactly the oppo-

site effect. The hitherto discordant elements of the popular party were at once united in the determination to punish the insolent invader and the traitorous French nobles who accompanied him. The line was at once and sharply drawn between the people on the one side and the king and aristocracy on the other. The latter, already hated with extreme bitterness, were now looked upon as traitors eager to lend aid to the enemies of their country. While French soldiers were even now opposing the invading forces with their lives, while true patriotism was seeking means to defend the native soil, the court and aristocracy were waiting with joy till foreign arms should have triumphed over their countrymen and restored them to their ancient privileges. And this view was partly a true one. The king sincerely regretted the proclamation and detested the invasion. But his position for so long had been one of apparent opposition to his people, that no faith was placed in his professions. And there is no doubt that the queen and her party did welcome the foreigner. All Paris realized that instant measures must be taken to save the city from the enemies which threatened it from without and within. If the Duke of Brunswick succeeded in his enterprise, no man who had taken part in the Revolution could think his life or property secure, and France would return to the old despotism, made worse by its dependence on foreign arms. The protection of the frontier might for the moment be left to the French armies; but how should safety be

secured from the internal enemies who plotted the ruin of France within her capital?

The Gironde and the majority of the Assembly were still in favor of comparative order. To them the situation seemed bad enough, and they feared to see it grow worse. But they were too much divided in opinion, too irresolute and given to long speeches, to be able to exert control. All France was now in arms, demanding immediate and vigorous action. The Jacobin minority was neither uncertain as to its objects nor scrupulous as to its means. As was natural at a time of such public danger, the most daring leaders were conceded the power they demanded, and very soon the last restraints on the Jacobins disappeared. The general sense of impending calamity led many to withdraw opposition from men whom they abhorred, but who still appeared to be the only reliable defenders of France. With the emigrant nobles bringing their avenging arms into the country, with the court secretly in sympathy with the enemy, the Jacobins and their fanatical patriotism seemed the only resource against foreign invasion and domestic treachery. The leaders seized upon the power thus abandoned to them. From the parent society in Paris were sent messengers to the provinces demanding reënforcements of desperate men. The pikemen of the city and the National Guards were organized for the new work in view. The populace was everywhere harangued by Jacobin orators, and taught that France could not be safe till

the monarchy and the aristocracy had been exterminated. Passion was excited to the point of frenzy. By the 1st of August the streets were filled with armed crowds, who only awaited the signal to strike down all whom their leaders pointed out.

Danton, Pétion, and their colleagues laid their plans with system and vigor. The Assembly was kept in subjection by armed bands who daily invaded the floors and the galleries, beating and throwing stones at the deputies who displeased them as they left the hall. A petition was got up by the sections of Paris demanding the dethronement of the king, and meanwhile an organized insurrection was fixed for August 10, when this result should be attained by force. The uncertainty and demoralization of the rest of the community gave the Jacobins full scope for their efforts. But they were still a minority, and knew that they must win or perish. The individual they most feared was Lafayette. Their furious denunciations of him to the populace had had so much effect that Morris wrote to Jefferson on the 1st of August, "I verily believe that if M. de Lafayette were to appear just now in Paris unattended by his army, he would be torn to pieces." But when they undertook to remove this obstacle from their path by proposing a decree of accusation against the general in the Assembly on the 8th of August, the respectable deputies defeated them by a vote of two to one.

The fact that any sort of union or courage among the better classes might have averted the catastrophe

is shown by the circumstance that the insurrection planned for the 9th of August had to be postponed till the 10th, to enable the leaders to get their forces under control and to work up their failing courage to the necessary pitch.

All through the night of August 9 the bands of pikemen and ruffians were marshalled in the faubourgs and about the Tuileries. Ample warning was given of the rising, and the means were not wanting to defeat it. Maudat, the commander of the National Guards, had taken measures to defend the Tuileries, but during the night the Jacobins enticed him from his post and murdered him. The Guards, demoralized as they were, became useless with the loss of their leader. The Swiss who remained in the king's service could have repelled the rioters alone; but nowhere was to be found enough courage or resolution to make a show of resistance. The more respectable middle classes held aloof, the nobles who surrounded the king were too weak and unpopular to assist him. The queen, who had recently sent large sums of money to Danton and Pétion, both of whom were in the pay of the court, while planning its destruction, relied upon those treacherous "patriots" to defeat the insurrection. Marie Antoinette and the court generally hardly regretted the approaching disorders, thinking that the worse the situation became, the sooner the Duke of Brunswick would march to Paris bringing with him safety and revenge.

By daylight of the 10th the army of pikes was set

in motion and surrounded the Tuileries. The royal family, looking from their windows, saw an endless, surging, yelling crowd, containing the most vicious off-scouring of the city, male and female, thirsting for the lives of their sovereigns and the few friends who still clung to them. The poor king went out and addressed the National Guards, but the loss of their commander and the furious yells of the mob soon completed their demoralization. The faithful Swiss yet remained, and could Louis himself, or any one for him, have resolutely defended the palace with their assistance, the cowardly mob might yet have been driven off. But the king was not of that mould, nor was there courage enough anywhere in the palace, the Assembly, or the city to give him help. Yielding to the advice of one of his servants, who thought only of saving his master's life, Louis resolved to take refuge with the Assembly. The royal family walked through the gardens to the Assembly chamber, the king stolid and unmoved, the queen shedding bitter tears, the little dauphin kicking the fallen leaves in sport.

With the desertion of the Tuileries by the king, his life was saved for the time, but his crown was lost. The mob was balked of its royal prey, but its thirst for blood had yet to be satisfied. An attack on the palace was met by a volley from the Swiss that sent the Jacobin hordes yelling in retreat. But Louis, now safe in the Assembly chamber, sent orders to the Swiss to cease firing ; and these devoted men, forbidden

to defend the palace, were overwhelmed by the mob, whose ferocity was sharpened by its repulse, and whose valor increased with the defencelessness of their opponents. Every one found in the palace, whether Swiss, courtier, or servant, was soon ruthlessly murdered and their bodies mutilated. No savage massacre was ever carried on with less mercy, nor could barbarous tribes have taken more satisfaction in hacking the remains of their victims. Crowds of abandoned females, arrayed in the plundered finery of the court, danced about the blood-stained dead, yelling for the "Austrian woman." When human objects of rage were lacking, the treasures of the palace, furniture, pictures, and statues were strewn in fragments over the floors. The massacre extended from the Tuileries over the city, noble men and women, people known to favor the constitution or to have opposed the Jacobins, were sought out and slaughtered in the name of "patriotism." When the Assembly adjourned, the deputies found armed bands without the doors grimly waiting to cut down those of monarchical or constitutional views. The Jacobin officials were careful to clear the hall, that it might not afford shelter to "aristocrats;" and the representatives of the people were thrust out, some to be greeted with triumphant yells, others to be hacked to pieces. Paris was a scene for many hours of carnage and terror. Noble families rushed from place to place in the often vain effort to save their lives. Morris's house was an asylum for many. The cynical American



might well feel justified in his belief that the French were not yet ready for liberty.

There is frequently to be found among French writers the statement that the revolution of August 10 was the work of a few thousand individuals; that the majority of the Assembly and the nation took no part in it and disapproved of it. But it is impossible to shift the responsibility. The majority of the Assembly and the better classes of the people were fully warned of the intended violence. Lafayette had foretold it, and had in vain striven to arouse a concerted opposition. The majority stood idly by, allowed the Jacobins to have their way, and thus became equally responsible. Had the Assembly been sincere in its opposition to the violent overthrow of the monarchy, there was yet time to repair the evil while the king was in the chamber. But the Assembly was glad enough to be rid of the king and his veto power, and to be able to govern without any restriction. Moreover, the time for resistance had passed. The lack of courage and judgment which had brought the better class of deputies under the heel of the clubs gave them no resource but to carry out the plans of their new masters.

When the royal family arrived in the Assembly, it was sent off into a reporter's box, under pretence that the deliberations must be "free." While the mob was still murdering in the Tuileries and the streets, Vergniaud, one of the most eloquent of the Girondists, moved that the king be dethroned and a convention

summoned to determine the future government of the country. These measures were carried with acclamation. The royal family was consigned to the mercies of the municipality, which meant the Jacobin Club, and were imprisoned in the Temple.

As the national government had ceased to exist, the authorities of Paris practically controlled the country. On the day of the insurrection, the Jacobins took forcible possession of the municipal government, called it the "Commune of August 10," filled all the offices with their own men, and now reigned supreme. The National Guard was at once reorganized, the respectable element eliminated, and the ranks filled with the pikemen of the clubs. Possessing unrestricted power, and with an army at their orders, the Jacobin leaders went forward unchecked. Danton thundered against the internal enemies who plotted the destruction of patriots. By order of the Commune, the houses of all the nobility remaining in Paris and of all those who were thought to favor the monarchy were searched and their occupants arrested. The prisons were soon crammed with captives, who, with the royal family, were held as hostages for the immunity of their captors. But a few weeks passed before great numbers of them — men, women, and children — were cut to pieces in the September massacres. The Reign of Terror had begun in earnest. The despotism of the populace was to exceed in a few months the bloody deeds of many reigns of absolute monarchs.

The news of the 10th of August was carried to

Lafayette by one of his own officers who happened to be in Paris on business. He learned that the throne was overturned and the Assembly in subjection, but he could not believe that the cause of the constitutional monarchy was abandoned without a struggle. He announced to the army the events that had taken place, and conjured the men to remain true to the king and constitution. The commissioners despatched by the Commune of Paris to announce to the different armies the change of government and to exact oaths of fidelity to it soon arrived at Sedan within Lafayette's command.

The general had them brought before the municipality of Sedan and interrogated regarding their mission. Convinced, from their own account, that they were the agents of a faction which had unlawfully seized upon power, he ordered their arrest and had them imprisoned.

Lafayette's moral influence in the army and the country was still so great that the Jacobins knew that they must either destroy him or win him over to their side. The latter course was preferred, as the general could be of immense service to them. Accordingly, they stated in their newspapers in Paris—the only ones allowed to be published—that Lafayette was in favor of the revolution of August 10, and they gave the commissioners special instructions to gain his adherence. The imprisoned commissioners, therefore, requested a private conference with Lafayette, and offered him, on the part of their superiors in Paris,

whatever executive power he desired in the new government. It is needless to say that Lafayette, whose sole aim was to establish liberty in his country, refused to entertain the idea of associating himself with the despotism of the mob.

He caused his own soldiers to renew their oath of fidelity to the king, and communicated with Luckner on the situation. The old German, who understood neither the liberty of Lafayette nor that of the Commune, could only beg him to keep the commissioners where they were and not let them reach his camp. Addressing his army, Luckner said in broken French, which was afterwards rendered into similar English by Lafayette: "Officers, unter-officers, soldiers: A ferry creat accitent has just happent in Paris. Te enemy who are pefore us, I mock at tem; but te enemy who are pehint us, I mock at tem not. If money be give you, take it; I mock at tat. Do not abanton me. I will nefer abanton you."

When the news of Lafayette's arrest of the commissioners reached Paris, it added greatly to the prevailing excitement and passion. A portion of the dominant party wished to have him declared a traitor at once by the Assembly; but others feared that his influence with the army might enable him to march to Paris and destroy the usurping faction. The responsibility for the arrest of the commissioners was for the time placed on the shoulders of the provincial authorities in whose department it occurred.

Meanwhile, emissaries from the Commune were sent

to Sedan to influence the soldiers by bribes and threats to renounce their loyalty to their commander. All the other armies and provinces to which commissioners had been sent had received them and taken the new oaths. Lafayette found himself alone in his resistance. His attitude acquired, every day, more the appearance of rebellion against authorities recognized by the rest of France. New commissioners arrived, bringing with them his dismissal from command. The army was wavering between attachment to their general and obedience to government. On the 19th of August, the Jacobins, seeing that they could not win him over, caused the Assembly to declare him a traitor.

Lafayette had now to take an immediate resolution. France had declared for the Paris Commune. The constitutional monarchy was irretrievably destroyed. For the general to dispute with his appointed successor the command of the army was to provoke further disorders in a cause that had ceased to be that of the nation and become only his own.

Three possible courses remained open to him, — to accept the Jacobin overtures and become a part of their bloody despotism ; to continue his resistance and give his head to the guillotine ; to leave the country. He resolved to seek an asylum in a neutral territory, with the hope, as he himself somewhat naively expressed it, “ some day to be again of service to liberty and to France.”

Lafayette made every preparation for the safety of

his troops, placing them under the orders of Luckner until the arrival of Dumouriez, the new general in command. He publicly acknowledged responsibility for the arrest of the commissioners and the defiance of Sedan to the Commune, in order that the municipal officers who had supported him might escape punishment. He included in his party his staff-officers, whose association with him would have subjected them to the fury of the Commune, and some others who had also been declared traitors on account of obedience to his orders. He then made his way to Bouillon, on the extreme frontier. There, dismissing the escort, and sending back final orders for the security of the army, he rode with his companions into a foreign land.

Thus the revolutionary career of General Lafayette ended naturally with the destruction of the constitutional monarchy, which he had labored so hopefully to establish. Lafayette had failed, and France had failed. The political aspirations which animated the revolution of 1789 were honorable, and have conferred permanent benefits on France. The slavery by which the nation had been cursed so long had become intolerable. The ancient feudal edifice was falling into ruin through its own rottenness. But when it had been overthrown, when the accumulated abuses of ages had been suddenly swept away, the nation had been too long in servitude to rise into self-government and to build up a free State. Her attempt to do so had failed. The authors of the revolution of 1789

had been incapable of realizing their objects, and were in their turn overthrown by the revolution of 1792. The tyranny of a king had been discarded, only to be succeeded by the worse tyranny of a mob.

Lafayette's career during the revolution of 1789 had been chiefly military. As the leader of the National Guard, his sympathy with the people, his conciliating temper, his moderation and tact, had been of real service to the preservation of order. The condition into which the National Guard fell when he ceased to command it, sufficiently proclaims the success of his administration. But of his political views and acts, so much in his favor cannot be said. He had shared the passion for innovation which was universal among his countrymen, and caused the ruin of their efforts. He had the nobility of mind to embrace with enthusiasm the principles of liberty and justice which he saw practised in America, but he lacked the judgment to see that a different system was required for a people which had no experience in self-government.

Whatever his political errors, however ill fitted he may be considered to guide his country through a great convulsion to permanent peace, his pure unselfishness, his nobility of aim, his sincerity of conviction, and his fidelity to principle must mark him as an exceptionally admirable character for his age and nation. The bloody calamities now impending over France might have been averted had any considerable number of his countrymen possessed his moderation, his constancy, and his spirit of self-sacrifice. The

rottenness of the old monarchy had not been in the court only; the whole State had become honey-combed with corruption. In the lack of public virtue is to be found a most potent cause of the failure of the French to govern themselves, and of the ease with which they fell under the domination of a few. In April, 1789, before the States-General had met, Gouverneur Morris, who saw what France was, and knew what the word "liberty" involved, had thus written to George Washington: —

"The materials for a revolution in this country are very indifferent. Everybody agrees that there is an utter prostration of morals; but this general position can never convey to an American mind the degree of depravity. It is not by any figure of rhetoric or force of language that the idea can be communicated. A hundred anecdotes and a hundred thousand examples are required to show the extreme rottenness of every member. There are men and women who are greatly and eminently virtuous. I have the pleasure to number many in my own acquaintance; but they stand forward from a background deeply and darkly shaded. It is, however, from such crumbling matter that the great edifice of freedom is to be erected here. Perhaps, like the stratum of rock which is spread under the whole surface of the country, it may harden when exposed to the air; but it seems quite as likely that it will fall and crush the builders."

In the Twenty-first Book of the Iliad, where Achil-



les is seen flying before the overflowing Scamander, Cowper thus renders an image peculiarly applicable to the revolutionary career of Lafayette : —

“As when the peasant with his spade, a rill  
Conducts from some pure fountain through his grove  
Or garden, clearing the obstructed course,  
The pebbles, as it runs, all ring beneath,  
And, as the slope still deepens, swifter still  
It runs, and, murmuring, outstrips the guide.”

## CHAPTER IV.

Lafayette taken by the Allies. — Imprisoned at Magdebourg and Olmütz. — The Reign of Terror in France. — Bollmann and Hunger's attempt at Rescue. — Joined in Prison by his Wife and Daughters. — His Release in 1797. — Two Years of Exile.

LAFAYETTE and his companions had crossed the frontier into Belgium, which was neutral ground, and expected to make their way at once to Brussels, whence they might seek refuge in England or America. But at the town of Rochefort they found themselves at an outpost of the Austrian army, and unable to proceed without passports. To obtain these, Bureaux de Pusy repaired to Namur. The general in command at that place would have issued the passports as a matter of course, but when he learned that the party included General Lafayette, his excitement became intense. To foreigners, Lafayette was the incarnation of the Revolution they were fighting, and the possession of his person seemed a great part of victory. Bureaux de Pusy waited in vain for a reply to his request, while messengers were sent to the allied sovereigns and commanding generals on all sides, announcing that Lafayette was in their power. When De Pusy, becoming impatient, repeated his demand, the passports were flatly refused, and orders soon came from headquarters, by which the whole

party was arrested at Liege. To this treatment Lafayette protested justly, on the ground that he and his friends had ceased to be combatants, and were on neutral territory. Information was conveyed to him that he might recover his liberty by recanting his political opinions, which, of course, he refused to do.

The imprisonment of the Frenchmen was resolved upon, and the fortress of Wesel was chosen as the place of their confinement. On the journey, they halted at Namur, where Lafayette was told that the measure of his hardships would depend on the value of the information which he might afford the allies, to aid them in the prosecution of the war. Prince Charles entered his room for the purpose of receiving the expected disclosures, but the haughty contempt with which he was met so embarrassed him that he retreated without asking a question. At Nivelles, a commissioner from the Duke of Saxe Teschen made a formal demand upon Lafayette for the public treasure, which he was presumed to have taken with him from France. The general at first treated this demand as a joke ; but on its repetition he replied, "I am to infer, then, that if the Duke of Saxe Teschen had been in my place, he would have stolen the military chest of the army?"

The imprisonment at Wesel continued for several months, and was of so severe a nature that the health of all the prisoners was seriously affected. The cold, damp cell in which Lafayette was confined, the repulsive and insufficient food brought by a dirty soldier,

soon prostrated his powerful constitution. The prison physician testified to his dangerous condition, but the result was only the usual offer of better treatment if he would furnish the allies with military plans. The indignant replies returned by him were punished by renewed severity. Wesel not being deemed sufficiently secure, the prisoners were conveyed to the fortress of Magdebourg in March, 1793. Although the journey was performed in common carts, over rough roads, it afforded a great relief to Lafayette and his friends, to whom fresh air and companionship had become unknown pleasures. At the town of Ham they secured a moment's conversation with Damas, a Girondist, who had lately escaped from the fury of the Jacobins. From him they obtained the first information of what was occurring in France, — the terrible despotism of the Reign of Terror, the carnage and lawlessness which carried blood and ruin into every part of the country, the awful sequel of that Revolution which was to have brought liberty and happiness to France. Such were the thoughts which they carried with them into their new prison, to be the only companions of the narrow cells, where day after day dragged on in gloomy solitude.

The cell which Lafayette occupied at Magdebourg for nearly a year was a space about eight feet by four excavated under the outer rampart. Its dampness was such that the walls were covered with mould, and a small opening in the door admitted light, but never the rays of the sun. Four outer doors, heavily chained,

secured the prisoner, and two guards fixed their eyes unceasingly upon him. Lafayette could sometimes see through the bars the altered countenance of his friend Maubourg, who occupied the opposite cell ; but otherwise his solitude was complete. For five months he was thus confined, day and night. But the fatal effect of such treatment becoming evident, all the prisoners were at last allowed to pass one hour daily in the court-yard, surrounded by soldiers. The contact with the outer air and the sight of the sun were at first overpowering, but their good effect enabled the prisoners to keep alive. In the beginning of 1794, Lafayette's companion, Alexander Lameth, not being expected to live, was released on parole. Maubourg and De Pusy were transferred to Glatz, and Lafayette to Neisse, near the Austrian frontier. The King of Prussia, foreseeing the necessity of soon making peace with France, resolved to turn over the prisoners to the Emperor of Austria. Accordingly, they were transferred secretly across the frontier to the fortress of Olmütz, where numbers were substituted for their names, and none but a few officials were allowed to know the place of their imprisonment or even the fact of their continued existence.

Up to the time of his exile, Lafayette's life had been a series of successes, real or apparent. Popular applause had rung ceaselessly in his ears, and the highest objects of ambition seemed practically attained. But now had begun years of hardship and suffering, when success was turned into failure, when

the world's applause was replaced by a jailer's command, when a heart particularly susceptible to affection was tortured by the uncertain fate of all that it held most dear.

From Rochefort, the first stopping-place after his departure from France, he wrote to his wife, "Whatever may be the vicissitudes of fortune, my dear heart, you know that my soul is not of the kind to give way ; but you know it too well not to have pity on the suffering that I experienced on leaving my country. For having ruined my family I make no excuse, neither to you nor to my children. There is none among you who would wish to owe fortune to conduct contrary to my conscience. Join me in England ; let us establish ourselves in America. We shall find there the liberty which exists no longer in France, and my tenderness will seek to recompense you for all the enjoyments you have lost." After his arrest he could no longer venture to address any letters to his wife, which would certainly be intercepted in France, had they succeeded in crossing the frontier. Fortunately, Mme. d'Hénin, a devoted friend of the Lafayette family, was then in England. To her the prisoner addressed such letters as he could, and for a few months she found means to communicate their contents to the family in France. Lafayette wrote under extreme difficulties ; a toothpick, with some lemon-juice and lampblack frequently served for pen and ink. The hardships which he had to endure were accepted with equanimity as his share in the

general suffering produced by the Revolution. "A prison," he wrote, "is the only proper place for me, and I prefer to suffer in the name of the despotism I have fought, than in the name of the people whose cause is dear to my heart, and which is profaned to-day by brigands."

His mind pondered ceaselessly on the few political events of which the news reached his cell. Of the execution of Louis XVI. he wrote as "the assassination of the king, in which all the laws of humanity, of justice, and of national faith were trampled under foot." His mind was tortured by the thought of the friends who were perishing under the Reign of Terror. "The name of my unhappy friend Laroche-foucauld ever presents itself to me. Ah, that crime has most profoundly wounded my heart! The cause of the people is not less sacred to me; for that I would give my blood, drop by drop; I should reproach myself every instant of my life which was not devoted to that cause; *but the charm is lost.*" The unbounded confidence which Lafayette had placed in the virtues of "the people" had been rudely shocked. The happy illusion which had animated him was dispelled. "The injustice of the people, without diminishing my devotion to the cause, has destroyed for me that *delicious sensation of the smile of the multitude.*"

In the midst of his anxieties for friends, family, and country, Lafayette's mind reverted with pleasure to America. There his career had brought no bitterness, and there his beloved Liberty reigned in peace. The

Fourth of July, 1793, was duly observed in the Magdebourg cell, and a long letter, full of good wishes and congratulations, was surreptitiously despatched to Mr. Pinckney, the American minister in London. American friendship was not wanting in good offices for the prisoner. Two thousand florins from the United States were deposited in Prussia, subject to his order, and formed his pecuniary resources. Through the intervention of Mr. Pinckney, the King of Prussia consented that he should be informed that his wife and children were yet alive.

The prison of Olmütz, where the three Frenchmen arrived in May, 1794, was an old convent. When the prisoners were placed in their cells, they were informed that they should henceforth see only the four walls about them, that they should never hear again of each other or of the outer world, and that even the jailers should never speak of them except by their numbers. Extraordinary precautions were adopted to secure the complete isolation of the prisoners. Their meals were served at different hours in their cells; no one of the guards was allowed to speak to them, nor to take any notice of their remarks and questions. A few books which had passed through a rigid scrutiny were allowed. These and their thoughts constituted the only occupation. In such confinement and isolation Maubourg and De Pusy passed three years and a half at Olmütz. Lafayette became so sick at the end of a few months that he was allowed to take an occasional walk or drive under a guard.



Since the imprisonment of Lafayette, many friends in England and America had made efforts to obtain his release. These had been without result, and the entire secrecy maintained in regard to his present situation and existence made further measures very difficult. A Hanoverian, named Dr. Erick Bollmann, an enthusiastic admirer of the general, had presented to the King of Prussia a vain petition in his favor. In the autumn of 1794, Bollmann resolved to attempt a forcible rescue, and concerted a very ingenious plan. Having learned that some State prisoners were guarded with unusual secrecy at Olmütz, he assumed that Lafayette must be among them. Staying for a short time in the neighboring town, he contrived to make acquaintance with the surgeon of the prison. After one of their professional conversations, which dealt with the effect of the mind on the body, Bollmann said, "Lafayette is among your patients. Here is a pamphlet which speaks of a number of his friends. Show it to him, and tell him that they are all well. This will do him much more good than your medicines." The unsuspecting surgeon complied, and on Bollmann's next visit told him that Lafayette was anxious to have a few questions answered regarding his friends. Bollmann sat down at once and wrote out the desired replies, ending with the phrase, "these few words, when read *with your usual warmth*, will afford to a heart like yours some consolation." The paper which Bollmann had then appeared to take at random from his pocket had been specially prepared for

such an emergency. It contained, written in sympathetic ink, the news that an attempt was to be made to rescue the prisoner, and a request to him to furnish information which might be of use. Lafayette took the hint conveyed in the underscored words, exposed the paper to heat, and read the invisible words. To disarm suspicion, Bollmann then left the place for a time. Meanwhile, Lafayette wrote in ink on the margins of a book a note of thanks for the information conveyed to him that his family still lived, characteristically adding that he was trying to keep himself alive and to "defend his own constitution as constantly, but apparently with as little success, as the national constitution." Then in lime-juice he wrote that his occasional drive presented the only opportunity for escape. When Bollmann called again upon the surgeon the book was returned to him, and he departed for Vienna to perfect his arrangements.

Bollmann felt the necessity of having a companion in his enterprise. He had met at Vienna a young American named Francis Kinlock Huger, who had told him that it was at his father's house in South Carolina that Lafayette had received shelter the first night of his arrival in America, and that the general had held him on his knee as a boy. To him Bollmann disclosed his purpose, and met with an enthusiastic coöperation. The two friends procured a travelling-carriage, two good saddle-horses, and a groom. They announced their intention of proceeding to England together, and in due course arrived at Olmütz. Boll-

mann called again on the surgeon, ascertained when Lafayette's next drive would occur, mentioned the same day as the date of his departure for England, and bade the surgeon farewell.

On the 8th of November, 1794, a carriage containing Lafayette, an officer, and two soldiers was seen by Huger to leave the prison. Bollmann had sent his carriage forward to Hoff, a town near the frontier, with orders to the groom to have everything in readiness to travel farther in the afternoon. The two friends mounted their horses, followed the prison carriage, and when in the open country, rode by it, exchanging a signal with Lafayette. Bollmann and Huger then allowed the carriage to pass them again, and followed on behind. After a time, the carriage stopped, its occupants got out and took a walk, while the carriage, still containing the guards, proceeded slowly along the road. They watched for opportunity had arrived. Bollmann and Huger galloped up to where Lafayette and the officer were standing. Lafayette seized the officer's sword, but the latter fought vigorously, kept possession of his sword, and called loudly for help. The guards on the carriage were panic-struck, and drove off to summon help from the town. The officer was getting the best of Lafayette and had bitten a piece out of his thumb, when Bollmann, who had handed the reins of his horse to Huger, ran up. Lafayette and Bollmann threw the officer down, and Huger, holding both horses with one hand, with the other stuffed a handkerchief into

his mouth to stop the cries which were attracting the attention of peasants at work in an adjoining field. While this struggle was going on, one of the horses became frightened and broke away from Huger. Bollmann continued to hold the officer down while he handed Lafayette a purse. Huger assisted him to mount the remaining horse and called to him in English to go to Hoff. Lafayette misunderstood these directions, thinking that he was only told to go off. He took the first road which he met with, and this, unfortunately, led to Jagersdorf instead of Hoff, where the carriage was waiting.

Bollmann and Huger let the officer go, and recovered the runaway horse, which had been caught by a peasant. But the animal ridden by Lafayette was the one intended to carry two persons. The horse now mounted by Bollmann and Huger speedily threw them to the ground. Huger generously gave up the horse to Bollmann, telling him to hasten to Lafayette's assistance, and that he himself would take his chances of escape on foot. Bollmann rode to Hoff, found no trace of Lafayette, and in a few days was arrested by Prussian officials, who handed him over to Austria. Huger was captured near the scene of the rescue. Lafayette reached a point near the frontier, but there his horse became exhausted. He engaged a man to bring a fresh one from an adjoining town, but the man's suspicions were excited, and he returned with soldiers who arrested the fugitive. After remaining for a few days in custody, he was recognized by

officers from Olmütz, and conveyed back to his prison.

Bollmann and Huger were severely punished for their gallant enterprise, being chained in their cells and nearly starved. After a long trial they were at last released through the intercession of Count Metrowsky, a magistrate living near the prison, who represented that the severe imprisonment of eight months which they had already endured was a sufficient penalty.<sup>1</sup>

After his attempt to escape, Lafayette was confined to his cell with unremitting severity and subjected to new privations. The anger of his guards vented itself in obscure hints regarding the fate of his rescuers, who were represented as certain to expiate their offence on the scaffold. All books were taken away; a bundle of straw, which was rarely changed, was substituted for a bed; his clothing was allowed to become so ragged as hardly to cover him; the physician who bandaged his wounded thumb was never permitted to speak. The solitude of his confinement and the entire ignorance in which he now remained regarding the fate of his family preyed upon his health more than the actual privations of his situation. His spirits and strength had become greatly reduced, when one day in October, 1795, he heard at his door, at an unusual hour, the rattle of keys and bars. He rose from

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Bollmann afterwards went to America and sought public employment there. Washington found him a troublesome guest. He was implicated in Burr's conspiracy at New Orleans, and in 1807 Lafayette interceded with President Jefferson in his favor.

the straw, faced the opening door, and saw entering his cell, beneath the crossed swords of the guards, his wife and his two daughters, Anastasie and Virginia.

While Lafayette had been lying in the prisons of the Coalition, his wife had endured a similar fate under the Reign of Terror. On the 2d of September, 1792, while the terrible massacres of that time were taking place, the Minister Roland arbitrarily ordered the arrest of Mme. de Lafayette at Chavaniac. With her eldest daughter and her aunt, who refused to leave her, she was taken as far as Puy. Thence she addressed letters to Roland and other officials, in which she protested with such courage and vigor against her arrest, that she was allowed to return to Chavaniac and there remain on parole, under the supervision of the town authorities. In October, 1793, she was again arrested and imprisoned, under the new law against the "suspects." In June, 1794, she was brought by Robespierre's agents to Paris, there to await her turn at the guillotine. The building in which she was confined was that of the College du Plessis, where her husband had been at school when a boy.

When Mme. de Lafayette was still at Chavaniac, her pecuniary resources had become so reduced by the circumstances of the Revolution, that she was at a loss to find means not only to meet ordinary expenses, but to satisfy the claims upon her of dependents and creditors. While in this distressed situation, Gouverneur Morris generously ad-

vanced to her a large sum of money. Mme. de Lafayette then wrote to him: "In the midst of all its anguish, my heart truly dilates at this moment with the feeling of lively gratitude which your goodness inspires in me. . . . In any other circumstances, and even in these, were it to any other person, it would be very painful to me to incur such obligations as I am contracting to you; but I think of him to whom I am indebted for the steps taken in my behalf, of those who with me are to receive the benefit of them, and I feel the consolation, rather than the weight, of these obligations. My gratitude to you, sir, must be very sincere and deeply felt, since it triumphs over all my resolutions; and I accept your offers of personal service, although I feel their full value and generosity. It would not be easy for me to express my feelings better than by such confidence." When she was brought to Paris to meet the fate of the rest of the nobility, Morris came to her assistance with yet greater services. Addressing an unofficial note to the authorities, he urged upon them the bad effect which the execution of Mme. de Lafayette would have in America, and pointed out that her death would please only the opponents of the French Republic. The Committee of Safety was not likely to listen to reason from any quarter, but Morris's letter seems to have caused them to postpone the execution. On the 22d of July, 1794, she remained in prison, while her grandmother, the Maréchale de Noailles, her mother, the Duchesse d'Ayen, and her sister, the Vicomtesse

de Noailles, were hustled into the fatal cart and beheaded on the same guillotine.

The sufferings which she was called upon to endure were especially terrible to one who lived so entirely in her affections. From the autumn of 1792 she had heard nothing of her husband except the fragmentary and terrifying news of his transfer from one prison to another. The intensity of her affection for him made the suspense almost impossible to bear. She had written to Washington asking his assistance to obtain her husband's release, at first cheerfully and confidently. No news of Washington's efforts reached her, and she wrote again and again, more and more imploringly. As time passed without result, her despair led her to doubt Washington's interest, and she wrote another letter, in which her anxiety and ignorance were reflected in actual reproach. Her fears for the safety of her children were not less agonizing. At Chavaniac, the means of daily subsistence were largely dependent on the good-will of neighboring peasants. The agents of the Terror made more than one violent entry into the house, running their swords through the family portraits and reducing the "*ci-devants*" to a proper realization of their destined end. The mother was torn from her children altogether at her second arrest, and obliged to leave them at the mercy of the first-comer. Her son's tutor bribed the jailer at Brioude, and from time to time introduced one of the children into the prison for a moment's embrace. With her husband exposed to the vengeance of the Coalition,



her children left unprotected to suffer for their father's principles, the cup of misery was not yet full. While in the prison in Paris, awaiting her doom, she received the news of the arrest of her sister, mother, and grandmother. The strength of her affection for her mother had never diminished since her girlhood, and for her grandmother and sister her tenderness was hardly less. She knew them all to be in the jailer's hands awaiting the executioner's, but she could not even hope for the satisfaction of perishing with them. The difference which had existed in the days preceding the Revolution between the pious household of the Duchesse d'Ayen and the wholly worldly, if not dissolute, life of French society became yet more marked in these days of horror. The memoirs of members of the nobility which describe the prison life under the Terror show that men and women carried with them into the jails the same social elegancies and the same social vices which hitherto had been their only preoccupations. The habit of devoting themselves solely to pleasure was so strong upon them, that while waiting for a bloody death they had no thought beyond passing agreeably the hours that remained. The same intrigues, the same coquetries, went on as of old. Many a wife's last moments were made miserable by her husband's attentions to another prisoner. When the prison doors were opened, the survivors gave entertainments called *bals des victimes*, to which only the relatives of the guillotined were invited. This lightness of mind and incapacity for serious reflection,

which made the French nobility frivolous alike in prosperity and misfortune, were characteristics not shared by the ladies of the Noailles family. Mme. de Lafayette's heart was wrung with anguish for her relatives and children, and her time was passed in prayers for them and in preparing herself for death. After her release, when she hastened to learn from the family confessor the fate of her sister, mother, and grandmother, she heard that all three had been supported in their supreme trial by the religious earnestness which had been their unfailing characteristic.

The Reign of Terror came to an end from its own excesses. After the constitutional monarchy was overthrown in 1792, France was nominally governed by the assembly called the Convention, but really by a few members of that body known as the Committee of Safety, who rapidly acquired despotic power. At first, from the incapacity of the allies, but afterwards by its own vigor, the nation repelled its invaders and made itself secure from foreign interference; but within the frontiers, revolutionary fury demoralized individual character and dissolved the bonds of civilized society. The horrors of civil war desolated many provinces, and massacres more than savage were everywhere perpetrated with impunity and even praise. By means of the revolutionary tribunal, the Committee of Safety hurried all opponents to the scaffold. The nobility — men, women, and children — were crowded into prisons, only to share the bloody fate of their king

and queen. As the revolutionary fury progressed, any personal superiority in wealth, letters, art, business, or even morals, became to the French democracy as hateful as nobility, and met with the same punishment. The calendar, and even the language, was changed, religion was destroyed, and the commonest virtues of humanity disappeared. The victims who were carried in batches every day to the guillotine were but a small number of the sum total who were murdered throughout the country, frequently by means compared to which the guillotine seemed kind. The arbitrary power of the old monarchy had never equalled this democratic despotism, nor had all the massacres and oppressions perpetrated in France by the long line of Bourbon kings occasioned the sacrifice of life which, in two years, proceeded under the "patriot" convention. After a time, divisions arose among the Jacobins, and three hostile parties formed themselves in the Committee of Safety, led respectively by Danton, Hébert, and Robespierre. The latter became the most powerful, sent Danton and his friends to the scaffold in March, 1794, and Hébert's party to the same fate in April. Robespierre then became dictator, the Terror reached its height, insanity and suicide increased enormously, the dregs of the populace had undisputed control, while whatever was respectable went into hiding. Awful massacres continued in the provinces; the whole-country was a scene of carnage and woe, while in Paris crime and profligacy were encouraged to do their

worst. To such a result, the attempt of self-government had brought France. Finally, a reaction came. The people were sick of blood ; judges and executioners were weary. On the 28th of July, 1794, Robespierre and his party were declared traitors by the Convention and, amid howls of delight, dragged to the guillotine.

This new revolution, called that of Thermidor, opened the prison doors ; but Mme. de Lafayette did not obtain her freedom till February, 1795, when she owed it largely to the exertions of Mr. Munroe, the new American Minister. Her first act was to send her son George to America under the care of his tutor, which was accomplished with the assistance of Mr. Russell, of Boston. Boissy d'Anglas procured a passport for her, and she then went by sea with her daughters to Hamburg. There, John Parish, the American Consul, gave her another passport, under the name of " Mme. Motier, of Hartford, in Connecticut," and supplied her with money. She then went to Austria and presented herself at Vienna to the Prince de Rosemberg, the grand chamberlain, who was acquainted with her family. The Prince de Rosemberg was taken by-surprise, and, touched by Mme. de Lafayette's appeal, he induced the emperor to grant her an audience. From him she begged and obtained permission to share the captivity of her husband.

The day of Mme. de Lafayette's arrival at Olmütz was passed almost without reference to the scenes

which she had witnessed in France. But in the evening, when the young girls had been removed to their cells, and when she was left alone with her husband, she informed him of the details of the Reign of Terror. Then, for the first time, he learned the fate of the Noailles family, the counterpart of so many others, — how the three noble women had been dragged to the scaffold on behalf of liberty and equality, and how they had died with prayers on their lips, happy in the knowledge that their faithful priest stood among the crowd, granting them a silent absolution.

The life of the Lafayette family at Olmütz would have been dreary at best, but was made additionally hard by the brutality of the jailers. The little money and some silver spoons which Mme. de Lafayette had brought with her were immediately seized. The cells were made unhealthy by their proximity to an open sewer, and they opened on a court where delinquent soldiers were whipped. Mme. de Lafayette's request to be allowed to go to church with her daughters and to have a soldier's wife to attend to their cells remained unanswered. A letter which she wrote to her son in America was intercepted. She was allowed to receive no correspondence except the letters from Mr. Parish containing the remittances of money by which she defrayed the family expenses in the prison. The days passed in unvarying routine. From twelve o'clock, the dinner hour, Mme. de Lafayette and her daughters were locked in the general's cell until eight o'clock in the evening, when each was locked in a separate cell,

and the keys sent to the commander in the neighboring town. The ladies occupied themselves with mending their clothes, and with patching up the remnants which remained of the general's. The young girls bore their imprisonment with cheerfulness, although they rebelled somewhat at being obliged to make every movement under the crossed swords of the guards. Lafayette himself improved greatly in health after his reunion with his family, and his spirits regained something of their habitual buoyancy. But his wife, who had suffered severely from the terrible anxieties of the past four years and from her imprisonment in Paris, had frequent attacks of illness. In February, 1796, after she had been nearly a year at Olmütz, she wrote to the emperor requesting permission to proceed to Vienna to obtain medical advice. Two months elapsed before any notice was taken of her letter. The commander then appeared at the door of her cell and informed her that she might leave the prison if she pleased, but that she would not be allowed to return to it. Mme. de Lafayette replied that she owed it to her family and friends to seek assistance for her health, but that she could not accept it under such conditions. Whatever her health and the disadvantage of such a residence for her daughters, she "would never expose herself to the horrors of another separation" from her husband.

Nearly two years were thus passed by the family at Olmütz, during which time they undoubtedly suffered much from confinement, bad food, and the disagree-

able nature of their surroundings. For these sufferings much commiseration has been expressed by friendly writers, and much indignation has been aroused against the Austrian court ; but the objects of this sympathy themselves never complained of their trials, accepting them as the necessary result of past events. Mme. de Lafayette was thankful enough to have escaped the fate of her friends and relations under the Reign of Terror, and thought herself happy in being able to be near her husband. The latter left on record an account of his five years' imprisonment, which contains no signs of anger towards his imperial jailer, nor of animosity for the privations that he was called upon to undergo. His sanguine temper and cheerful disposition procured him a constant equanimity, while his French gayety of mind caused him to fix his attention on what was humorous rather than on what was repulsive in his situation. He realized that a prison cell was his proper place. While the Revolution which he had done so much to strengthen was throwing his country into unprecedented convulsions of terror and bloodshed, while his political friends were exiled or murdered, a safe retreat in England or America would have brought little honor to him. The narrow cell at Olmütz, the dirty straw on which he lay, his tattered clothing, his repulsive food, his anxiety of mind, made up his legitimate share of the sufferings which fell to the lot of the men of 1789.

But at the time, this view was not taken by his friends, and great efforts were made to procure his release.

The party in power in France regarded him as an enemy, and were glad to have him out of the way ; but many individual Frenchmen took up his cause with enthusiasm. Among these was Joseph Masclet, a friend of Talleyrand's, who had emigrated to England, married, and settled there. Under the signature of Eleutherus, he published a number of letters in the English papers, setting forth with great eloquence the sufferings of the Lafayette family, and the injustice of their imprisonment. These letters produced so much effect, that the Austrian government endeavored without success to discover and to silence the author.

Under the influence of these writings, a number of persons belonging to the opposition party in England took up the subject with zeal. Sheridan, Lord Lauderdale, Wilberforce, the Duke of Bedford, the Duchess of Devonshire, and Colonel Tarleton, who had opposed Lafayette in his Virginia campaign, exerted themselves strenuously to induce the English government to exert pressure on Austria. Fitzpatrick, whom Lafayette had met during the visit to England which preceded his first voyage to America, and whom he had fought at the battle of Brandywine, thus expressed himself: "I can never sanction the idea that there exists in any corner of the British soil, in any English heart, conceptions so narrow, vengeance so base, as to wish to see the pupil of the illustrious Washington perishing in a dungeon on account of his political principles, were it even true that he had



learned those principles by supporting the cause of America against Great Britain." Charles Fox, a life-long friend, thundered in the House of Commons in favor of "that noble character, which will flourish in the annals of the world, and live in the veneration of posterity, when kings and the crowns they wear will be no more regarded than the dust to which they must return." But the government, then under the leadership of William Pitt, could not be forced to take any steps.

American interest in the subject was naturally very strong. As early as 1793, Jefferson wrote to Gouverneur Morris, urging him to represent to foreign powers "that our government and nation, faithful in their attachments to this gentleman for the services he has rendered them, feel a lively interest in his welfare, and will view his liberation as a mark of consideration and friendship for the United States, and as a new motive for esteem and a reciprocation of kind offices towards the power to whom they shall be indebted for this act." Mr. Marshall went to Berlin with a letter from Washington requesting the liberation of Lafayette as a favor. But the prisoner had already been transferred to Olmütz, and the application had to be made to Austria. Washington sent to Mme. de Lafayette, through bankers in Holland, one thousand dollars, which he delicately alleged that he owed to her husband on account of previous services. In May, 1796, with the consent of his cabinet, he wrote an unofficial letter to the Emperor of Austria, which was

duly delivered by the American Minister, John Jay. "Permit me only to submit to your Majesty's consideration," wrote Washington, "whether his long imprisonment and the confiscation of his estate and the indigence and dispersion of his family, and the painful anxieties incident to all these circumstances, do not form an assemblage of sufferings which recommend him to the mediation of humanity. Allow me, sir, on this occasion, to be its organ; and to entreat that he may be permitted to come to this country, on such conditions and under such instructions as your Majesty may think it expedient to prescribe."

No appeal made any impression on the Austrian court. And it was natural that such should be the case. All the governments of Europe were threatened, and some were overthrown, by the revolutionary doctrines put forth by France. As the most constant representative of liberal ideas, as the former leader in the struggle of the people against arbitrary power, Lafayette was regarded as a firebrand, made all the more dangerous by the purity of his motives and character. In the language of the Austrian cabinet, his "existence was a menace to the established governments of Europe." When Bollmann went to Berlin in 1793 with a French petition for Lafayette's release, he saw Lucchesini, the former minister of Frederick the Great, who had known the general during his German travels in 1785. Lucchesini frankly explained the reasons for denying the petition. "M.

de Lafayette is too fanatic on the subject of liberty ; he does not hide it ; all his letters show it ; he could not keep quiet, if out of prison. I saw him when he was here, and still remember a statement of his, which surprised me very much at that time : ‘ Do you believe,’ said he to me, ‘ that I went to America to make a military reputation for myself ? I went for the sake of liberty. When a man loves it, he can rest only when he has established it in his own country.’ ” When Mme. de Lafayette was in Vienna, on her way to Olmütz, she asked the release of her husband, on the ground that his detention could be of no importance. But she was quickly informed that it was considered of the greatest importance. Foreign governments made no distinction between the constitutional party in France and the Terrorists. To them Lafayette was the arch-criminal, and they intended that he should never leave his prison alive.

In the spring of 1797, the youthful Bonaparte had broken the power of Austria, had crossed the Italian Alps, and in sight of the emperor’s capital stood ready to dictate the terms of the treaty of Campo Formio. While the negotiations for this treaty were in progress, the French remembered that in an Austrian prison there lay three of their countrymen. Although these men were outlaws and exiles, they were yet Frenchmen, and as such, France could not allow her vanquished enemy to retain possession of them. Neither the Directory nor Bonaparte wished to see Lafayette in France, but both were determined

that Austria must give him up, and this action was demanded as a condition of the treaty. The Austrian cabinet procrastinated, but Bonaparte threatened. The emperor then sent General Chasteler to Olmütz to demand from the prisoners a written acknowledgment of their past good treatment, and an engagement never again to enter Austrian territory. Lafayette declined to make any statement regarding his treatment; but Maubourg and De Pusy set forth their sufferings in full. All three united in agreeing not to reënter the emperor's dominions unless in the service of their country. Dissatisfied with these replies, the Austrian cabinet resorted to subterfuge, represented that the prisoners had been liberated, and tried to hasten the signing of the treaty. But Bonaparte was not to be deceived. He sent Romeuf, one of his aides, to Vienna to insist on an immediate satisfaction of his demands. Romeuf was an old friend of Lafayette's, having served under him in the National Guard. He accomplished his mission with judgment, and soon procured the release of the prisoners, under the sole condition that the American Consul at Hamburg should promise to send them out of the Austrian dominions within ten days of their arrival at his house. The Austrian government, which had yielded only to the cannon of Bonaparte, represented to the United States authorities that the release was wholly due to the emperor's desire to gratify America. But this pretence deceived no one.

On Sept. 19, 1797, the prisoners of Olmütz bade

farewell to their cells, and for the first time in three years saw each other's faces. Maubourg and De Pusy were much wasted, but Lafayette's pleasure in the reunion with his family had so restored him that he appeared but little changed. The journey to Hamburg was pursued under a heavy guard, and was besides delayed by the delicate health of Mme. de Lafayette. At Dresden, the party was met by Mme. de Maubourg, with two children, and by Mme. de Pusy, with a daughter five years old, whom her father had never seen. The prisoners arrived at Hamburg on the 4th of October, and were conducted through crowds of sympathetic spectators to Mr. Parish's house. The next day, the Baron de Buol, on the part of Austria, formally delivered them to the American Consul.

The first act of the liberated prisoners was to unite in a letter of thanks to Bonaparte. Then they separated, to seek refuge beyond Austrian territory. After several receptions in the city, and on board an American vessel in the harbor, Lafayette, on the 10th of October, took his family to Holstein. There, at the *château* of Lemkhulen, near the town of Wittmold, he prepared to pass the remaining years of his exile.

In February, 1798, George Washington de Lafayette returned from America. The young man had been under the paternal care of Alexander Hamilton at New York, and of Washington at Mt. Vernon. Washington had been in doubt as to his proper course toward the son of his old friend. Lafayette was then a proscribed exile, denounced as a public enemy by the government

of France, with which the United States were at peace. On account of his official position, Washington feared to arouse hostility by public attentions to George Lafayette, and his position was fortified by the opinion of Hamilton and others. But he could not endure for long the thought that the young man was in America and yet not at Mt. Vernon. Informed by Hamilton that George was suffering in spirits from his ignorance of the fate of his parents and sisters in Europe, he called him to Mt. Vernon, and there cared for him during the remainder of his stay in America. In October, 1797, when the news of General Lafayette's liberation was received, Washington sent George and his tutor to New York, requesting Hamilton to procure them a passage to Europe, and to draw upon him for whatever money they should need. Soon after George's reunion with his family, Anastasie, Lafayette's eldest daughter, was married to Charles Latour Maubourg, a brother of her father's fellow-prisoner.

The general's pecuniary circumstances were now extremely straitened. The confusion of the country in 1792, and the haste of his departure, left his wife with debts which Morris's kindness had assisted her to satisfy. Other persons also had lent money during these trying years. To repay these loans and to liquidate such debts as remained in France was the object of Lafayette's chief solicitude. Nearly all of his land in Auvergne had been confiscated and sold during his imprisonment. His letter of thanks to Bonaparte on his liberation had been distasteful to the

directors, who revenged themselves by selling what property yet remained in Bretagne. Mme. de Lafayette still retained some possessions, and in 1799 went to France to collect what she could. In this emergency, the general was not deserted by fortune. While still at Hamburg, he received a letter from the executor of a Mrs. Edwards, an Englishwoman, who had bequeathed to Lafayette, as a tribute to his "virtuous and noble character," the sum of one thousand pounds. A year later, when he was living at Holstein, another similar legacy, for three thousand pounds, was delivered to him. These sums relieved his embarrassment, and enabled him to tide over the period which elapsed before he could regain possession of his remaining French property.

Early in 1799, Lafayette accepted an invitation from the Batavian Republic, now the Kingdom of Holland, to live at Utrecht. "Though the tolerance of Holstein," he wrote to Masclet, "was so comprehensive that even I was not excluded, it was uncomfortable to live under one of those ancient governments which are incompatible with my principles. Here (at Utrecht) I find good institutions and opinions, civil and religious liberty, the government having good intentions, and the governed knowing their rights and duties." The commander of the French forces near Utrecht complained to the French and Batavian governments of Lafayette's presence; but the Batavian government refused to expel him. Had he not been granted this asylum, his position would have been

serious. His friend De Pusy, who had attempted to reach America, had been captured by the English. In his own words, "From Constantinople to Lisbon, from Kamschatka to Amsterdam, only bastilles await me." "France, I should poison with my *aristocracy* and my *royalism*. . . . If I had not a refuge here, I should have to live with the fishes."

During these two years, Lafayette maintained an active correspondence with Washington, Jefferson, and Hamilton in America, with Fox and Fitzpatrick in England, and with many of his French friends. This correspondence brings out a phase of his character which the stirring events of the last few years had thrown into the background. The strong affections which attached him in such close friendship to other men, the amiability of his disposition, and the charm of his personality now came into play again. His relations to such men as Washington, Hamilton, Fitzpatrick, and Fox, none of whom had seen him for many years, were of a distinctly affectionate nature on both sides. Hamilton writes to him, "My friendship for you will survive all revolutions and all vicissitudes. No one more than I feels how many reasons our country has for loving you, for wishing your happiness, and for desiring to contribute to it. I would not love my country as I do if its feelings towards you were not shown in an unequivocal manner. The only subject upon which our parties agree is the equal affection that all bear towards you." The correspondence with Fox, Fitzpatrick, Masclet, and other friends reveals



many similar passages in which personal attachment, formed in youth, had only deepened with time. Washington wrote frankly of his hopes, fears, and plans, as to a friend to whom he could open his heart. Lafayette's replies, full of comments on the political situation in Europe, are marked by the attitude of reverence which he always maintained toward his former chief. "I have the unceasing pleasure," he ends a letter, "of talking with George of Mt. Vernon, of its dear and venerated inhabitants, of the sweet obligations so profoundly felt, contracted by father and son toward him who has become a father for both."

When not engaged in active service, Lafayette habitually took a pen in hand to comment on the events which had passed under his eye. The literary product of these years of exile were the "Recollections on leaving Prison." This review, expressed in the simple, clear style which characterized his writings, is marked by acuteness, moderation, and fairness, and has a real historical value. Fault has been found in these pages with Lafayette's judgment when in action. It has been shown that generous impulses, rather than calm reason, had frequently dictated his course. Now that he looks upon the past and the present as a spectator, we find his opinions of his own and other men's acts to be founded on a just and sagacious appreciation of events. Experience had dispelled fond illusions, had brought a clearer discernment of past mistakes and present possibilities. He found society transformed by the changes which had occurred dur-

ing his five years' imprisonment, and he was frequently reminded of the part he had taken in them by the hatred of which he saw himself the object. As he looked upon the results of the Revolution, he discerned the good and the evil. He enumerated with satisfaction the long list of abuses, cruelties, and oppressions which had been swept away. He rejoiced at the immense impetus which had been given throughout Europe to the principles of political liberty and justice which lay so near to his heart. "But," he mourns, "if it belonged to me more than to another to rejoice at these effects of a first impulse, what griefs and what disappointments had I not to deplore in the unhappy deviations which had followed!" He summed up the course of events with the phrase, "*The good and the evil of the Revolution seemed, in general, to be separated by the line which I had followed.*" This estimate is no more than just, and he could make it now that he faced the bitter hatred of despotism, aristocracy, and Jacobinism. As the man of 1789, who strove to replace the falling edifice of the old monarchy by a constitutional government, he could say with truth that the French Revolution from 1789 to 1792 had been a worthy, if short-sighted, effort to raise a nation from political servitude to political freedom. That effort had failed, and then the evil had ceased to be mingled with the good.

Speaking of the state of France in 1799, he penetrated the real situation: "The national masses are neither royalist, nor republican, nor anything else

which demands political reflection. They are against the Jacobins, against the Convention, against all those who have ruled since the republic was established. They wish to get rid of all that, even by a counter-revolution, but they prefer to halt at something of a constitutional nature. They will be so satisfied with a supportable state of things that they will hate to see any further change whatever." "Anything will do," he says elsewhere, "except an arbitrary aristocratic monarchy or a despotic republic." He saw that the excesses of the Reign of Terror had so perverted the idea of liberty that the nation thought itself opposed to a free government without really being so. He compared the people to the peasants of his province, who had been persuaded that they were aristocrats until they believed it. And the remedies, he justly perceived, must be adapted "to the present state of the national stomach." Concerning his future he thus expressed himself: "I have committed many faults, without doubt, because I have been much in action; therefore I do not wish to add anything more that seems to me faulty; hence, except on some very great opportunity for serving liberty and my country after my own fashion, my political life is ended. For my friends I shall be full of life; for the public I shall be like a picture in a museum or a library-book."

And again, writing to his wife in October, 1799: "As for me, dear Adrienne, whom you think with terror ready to resume a public career, I assure you that I care little for many pleasures which you know

I used to value too highly. The wants of my soul are the same, but they have taken a more serious character, more independent of the colleagues and of the public, whose approbation I appreciate better. To end the Revolution to the advantage of humanity, to use my influence in favor of measures useful to my contemporaries and to posterity, to reëstablish the doctrine of liberty, to consecrate my regrets, to heal wounds, to render homage to the martyrs in the good cause, — to me such would be the joys which could still expand my heart ; but I am more disinclined than ever—I am invincibly so—to take root in public affairs. I should never enter them but to lend a hand, so to speak ; and nothing, nothing in the world, I swear to you on my honor, by my tenderness for you, and by the shades of those whom we mourn, will ever persuade me to renounce that plan of retreat which I have formed, and in which we shall quietly pass the rest of our lives.”

## CHAPTER V.

The Revolution of Brumaire. — Lafayette returns to France. — Intercourse with Bonaparte. — Retirement at Lagrange. — Settlement of his Debts. — Death of his Wife. — His Attitude toward the Consulate and the Empire.

AFTER the treaty of Campo Formio had been signed in October, 1797, Bonaparte returned to Paris the foremost man in France. His victories had astonished Europe, his assumption of almost imperial power in dictating the terms of peace and in regulating the affairs of conquered countries had marked him as much a leader in political as in military affairs. Before his glorious career and vigorous personality, the unpopular and divided republican Directory could not long retain authority. France, weary of dissension, political failure, and disorder, longed for a strong hand at the head of affairs. The Directors, jealous and fearful of the bright star which absorbed the attention of the nation, eagerly assented to Bonaparte's desire to strike a blow at the power of England by the invasion of Egypt, and in May, 1798, they saw him depart on that expedition with a feeling of relief.

During his absence, the revolutionary principles forcibly maintained by the French in the countries under their domination stirred up new and bitter strifes. The allies, encouraged by the weakness of the Directory and the absence of Bonaparte, renewed

the war all over Europe. They were generally successful ; the French were driven from Italy, but Massena's great victory at Zurich, in September, 1799, checked their course and prevented any invasion of French territory. These reverses greatly increased the unpopularity of the Directory, which ceased to have any support beyond the military force at its command.

Bonaparte, in Egypt, kept himself well informed of the state of affairs in France. The defeats and weakness of the government convinced him that his hour had come. He left his army in safety, and in October, 1799, landed without warning in Provence. From the sea-coast to Paris his reception resembled more a royal progress than the journey of a military officer. In Paris, there was hardly any concealment of the feeling that an acknowledged and welcome master had arrived. Bonaparte accepted as his due the adulation and submission which greeted him from all parties but that of the expiring republic, and it was immediately evident that his complete control was only a matter of time.

The course of the French Revolution had tended naturally to a military despotism. The failure of the effort to establish a constitutional monarchy in 1792 had thrown all power into the hands of the extreme democrats, whose bloody tyranny was cut short by the revolution of Thermidor, July, 1794. The republican government of the Directory had followed, only to fail in its turn through corruption and incapacity. Now,

after ten years of disorder, blood, anarchy, democratic tyranny, financial ruin, and political failure, the French people were weary of the attempt to govern themselves, and wished to shift the responsibility of government from their own shoulders to those of a capable individual. The immense personal abilities exhibited by the youthful Bonaparte, the glory which his victories had reflected upon France, pointed to him as the safest depository of authority, while the military pomp which surrounded him dazzled the national imagination.

Bonaparte had shown on many occasions his hatred of revolutionary doctrines, his contempt for liberal ideas, and his lack of faith in political liberty of any kind ; but the bulk of the people were not inclined to quarrel with his views on these subjects, and he himself disguised them skilfully in the plans which he made for the acquisition of power. He pretended that his object in assuming authority was to guarantee the liberties acquired by the Revolution. He joined to himself two colleagues, on whom he placed the odium of whatever was despotic in the new order. The *coup d'état* of Brumaire, which took place on the 9th of November, 1799, made Bonaparte, as first consul, the Dictator of France. His own forcible efforts in bringing about that revolution only hastened an inevitable result of the country's condition.

The complete change of government brought about by the revolution of Brumaire altered the situation of Lafayette very materially. In the eyes of the

Directory he had been an outlaw, forbidden to enter French territory. He might have procured the erasure of his name from the list of emigrants had he been willing to give the Directors his support. But their many acts of tyranny and violence, notably during the commotions of 18 Fructidor, had excited his disapproval to such a degree that his letters of thanks after his deliverance from Olmütz had been addressed only to Talleyrand, the foreign minister, and to Generals Bonaparte and Clarke. As we have seen, the Directors had retaliated by confiscating more of his property in France. Therefore, as long as the government of the Directory existed, Lafayette could not hope to reënter his country.

The advent of Bonaparte to supreme power did not at first improve the situation of aristocratic emigrants, but it seemed to open the way for Lafayette's return. The real character and objects of Bonaparte were, as yet, little known to any one. Lafayette, in his exile, could have no information concerning them. For the man who had been so instrumental in procuring his liberation, he felt the liveliest gratitude. For the general who had led French armies to such splendid victories, he had an enthusiastic admiration. In March, 1798, he had sent to him a letter expressing his thanks and pledging his attachment. His own political ideas were so disinterested, that now, as often before, he attributed the same unselfishness to others. When he heard of Bonaparte's return from Egypt, he wrote to his wife: "People jealous of Bonaparte see in me his future



opponent ; they are right, if he wishes to suppress liberty ; but if he have the good sense to promote it, I will suit him in every respect. I do not believe him to be so foolish as to wish to be only a despot." In this letter to his wife he enclosed one for Bonaparte. "The love of liberty and country would suffice," he wrote, "for your arrival to fill me with joy and hope. To this desire for public happiness is joined a lively and profound sentiment for my liberator. Your greeting to the prisoners of Olmütz has been sent to me by her whose life I owe to you. I rejoice in all my obligations to you, citizen-general, and in the happy conviction that to cherish your glory and to wish your success is an act of civism as much as of attachment and gratitude."

Thus, when Alexander Romeuf arrived at Utrecht bringing the news of the 18th Brumaire and the establishment of the Consulate, Lafayette believed that the moment to return to France had come. Bonaparte, on assuming power, had proclaimed his intention to preserve the principles and results of the revolution of 1789. Therefore, the place of Lafayette seemed to be in Paris. Romeuf had brought a passport with him, and Lafayette set out in two hours. He alighted in Paris at the house of the Marquis de Mun, where a number of friends gathered to receive him. His first step was to inform the consuls of his arrival and to justify his proceeding. To Bonaparte he wrote, that he considered that his proscription no longer became either himself or the government ; that he was in his

place wherever the republic was established on a worthy basis. To Sièyes he said, that when France recovered her liberty he should cease to be an exile.

His letters to the consuls met with very different receptions. Sièyes, who already felt crushed by Bonaparte's superiority and discerned his despotic tendencies, welcomed the accession to liberal strength in the person of Lafayette. But Bonaparte was extremely angry, and had his position been then sufficiently assured, he would have sent Lafayette back to Holland, or have thrown him into prison. He was furious at seeing his power braved by the exile's return without permission. But a consideration much more important was the effect that Lafayette's act might have upon the political situation. Bonaparte had been the enemy of the Revolution from the beginning. Now, his intention was to crush it. When the Directors had ordered him to insist on the liberation of the Olmütz prisoners, he had added to the French demand with his own hand a clause to the effect that the prisoners should not be permitted to reënter France. Now that he had made himself master, he knew that the opposition which might stand in the way of his projects would proceed rather from such disinterested men as Lafayette, who wished to preserve a rational liberty, than from the Jacobins and republicans, whose rule had been the worst tyranny, and of whom the country was anxious to be rid. To thrust the Jacobins into obscurity and to insure their submission, Bonaparte had only to keep alive the memory of their crimes.

But there yet remained among the people a strong attachment to the substantial results of the Revolution and to liberal ideas. Of these sentiments, Lafayette was the exponent. His presence in France must be a constant remonstrance against despotism. Moreover, the return of Lafayette meant the return of the other men exiled by the Jacobin power, and Bonaparte had no idea of readmitting them, any more than the aristocratic emigrants, without such conditions as his interest might impose.

Hence, he showed his anger so unreservedly when General Clarke delivered Lafayette's letter, that Talleyrand and St. Jean d'Angély, of his council, lost no time in finding the writer. They represented to him the fury of the first consul, predicted that he would adopt violent measures, begged Lafayette not to endanger his friends, and pressed him to return to Holland. But Lafayette felt himself on solid ground, and resolutely declined to retrace a step. He advised his visitors not to compromise themselves by taking his part; but, he maintained, "having thought proper to reënter France, it is now for the Consul Bonaparte to judge if it is proper for him to allow me to remain here. You should be sufficiently acquainted with me to know that this imperious and menacing tone would suffice to confirm me in the course which I had taken." Talleyrand and St. Jean d'Angély continued their remonstrances till midnight, but Lafayette left them, saying that "it would be very amusing for me to be arrested at night by the National Guard of Paris and

imprisoned in the Temple the next day by the restorer of the principles of 1789."

This parting remark contained the gist of his case, the strength of which was illustrated the next day. Mme. de Lafayette then called on Bonaparte and was graciously received. He could take no steps against the general without repudiating the liberal promises which it was his cue to hold out to the partisans of the Revolution. He informed Mme. de Lafayette that he regretted her husband's return only because it would "retard his progress toward the reëstablishment of Lafayette's principles, and would force him to take in sail." "You do not understand me, madame," he continued, "but General Lafayette will understand me; and not having been in the midst of affairs, he will feel that I can judge better than he. I therefore conjure him to avoid all publicity; I leave it to his patriotism." Mme. de Lafayette replied that such had been her husband's intention. Bonaparte took leave of her very civilly to attend his council, where he arrived, however, in a bad humor.

To the friends who called upon Lafayette to hear the result of his wife's interview, he said that he took no account of Bonaparte's threats, but he felt himself bound by the consul's recommendations. Thus, by returning to France without permission, and by establishing his right to remain there, he had gained a great point for himself and his political friends. He was still an outlaw with a price on his head when, in December, 1799, the Constitution of the year VIII.,

which established the consulship, was decreed by the legislative commissions. Hence, he had no opportunity to vote on the acceptation, which he would have opposed. The new constitution conferred dictatorial powers on Bonaparte. He had been careful to throw upon Sièyes the odium of this destruction of liberty in France, and then crushed what remained of that consul's influence by presenting him with a large public domain. Some time afterwards, when discussing with Bonaparte the Constitution of the year VIII., Lafayette taxed him with having himself dictated the provisions relating to the executive power. To this Bonaparte characteristically replied, "You know that Sièyes had put only shadows everywhere, — shadow of legislative power, shadow of judicial power, shadow of government. There had to be substance somewhere — *ma foi* ! I put it there." On the 1st of March, 1800, the consuls decided to erase from the list of emigrants the members of the Constitutional Convention who had voted for "equality." This measure restored Lafayette, as well as his party of 1789, to citizenship ; but it did not include De Pusy, the Maubourgs, Lameth, d'Arblay, and other officers who accompanied him across the frontier in 1792. He applied to the government for the erasure of these names at the same time with his own. His request was granted ; and when at last he found himself once more a French citizen, he had the satisfaction of knowing that his political party and personal friends were equally happy.

Bonaparte regarded Lafayette as politically an enemy, but personally his feelings toward him were friendly, and he was inclined to consider his character with justice. Speaking of the general to a confidential acquaintance, he observed, "Lafayette has the talent of making friends. If fortune abandoned me I should retain only my wife . . . and perhaps my brother Joseph." A courtier speaking of Lafayette as a Jacobin, Bonaparte warmly replied, "That is all very well, but it is nevertheless true that no one in the world is so much hated by the enemies of liberty and of France. I, who treated for his liberation, know very well what importance the foreign powers attached to his detention." But Bonaparte saw that Lafayette, the representative of national liberty, must be an obstacle in his path. When he attempted to arouse in the higher classes a spirit of voluntary military service, his agents suggested that the use of Lafayette's name would be of service. Bonaparte replied, "That is true, but there are objections to such a course." Proceeding on his plan of making Frenchmen forget their liberties, he adopted toward Lafayette a system of silence. On Feb. 8, 1800, the celebrated Fontanes delivered a eulogy on the character of Washington, who had lately died. Bonaparte personally forbade the orator to mention Lafayette's name in his discourse. He was not invited to the ceremony; his son George was coldly received. No Americans were asked to attend. The bust of Washington was draped with the banners which

Bonaparte had taken in battle, and the "Moniteur" mentioned as an honor to Fontanes that he had forgotten the hero of the United States in that of Egypt. Lafayette's son George had applied for and received a commission in a regiment of hussars. By his erasure from the list of emigrants, Lafayette was restored to his grade of major-general in the French army; but he abstained from asking for a command, and instructed his son, in case of Bonaparte's defeat in the coming Italian campaign, to offer his services as a volunteer. Bonaparte heard of this proceeding, and showed his appreciation of it. But no further intercourse took place between the two men till the return of the conqueror of Marengo to Paris.

As soon as Lafayette was established at Lagrange, the estate which his wife had inherited from her mother, he exerted himself to introduce order into his financial affairs and to settle his debts. Like the rest of the nobility, he returned from exile to find that his obligations were enormously increased by compound interest, and that nearly all his property had been confiscated. Of the Auvergne estate, there remained but the *château* and a few acres about it. A trifling amount of land in Bretagne had been overlooked by confiscation. The plantation in South America, which he had bought before the Revolution in pursuance of his philanthropic schemes for the emancipation of the negroes, was still owned by him, but it had been deserted for years and was now worthless. Lagrange belonged to Mme. de Lafay-

ette, but the *château* was dilapidated by years of neglect and contained no furniture. The property possessed value only as a farm. While its sale would bring but a small price, it was of the greatest importance to the Lafayette family as a home and a means of subsistence. Some of the money received from the English legacies was spent in making the house habitable and in beginning farming operations. Lafayette retained all his married children at Lagrange, in order that the family might make every possible economy. He could give no allowance to his son and no *dot* to his daughters but the privilege of remaining under his own roof after marriage. He then sold all the property of which he could dispose and proceeded to settle his debts. To pay them in full was found to be impossible. But his situation was so common a one after the Revolution, the impossibility of collecting the full amounts due from the ruined families so generally understood, that all the French creditors were glad to accept the terms which he was able to offer. Moreover, the enormous fluctuations and depreciation of the *assignats* — the legal-tender paper money of the revolutionary period — made it extremely difficult to fix upon the exact sum which any man owed in hard money. A debt of a thousand francs in gold or silver might be paid by a hundred francs' worth of assignats. Or enough assignats could be bought with a trifling amount of coin to pay large sums originally borrowed when the paper money was taken at near its face value. This



financial disorder upset all calculations and distracted men's minds on the subject of values and payments. The confidence placed in Lafayette at this time was justified by his past career. Few men had shown more disinterestedness about money. In America and in France he had not only refused to receive any remuneration for his services, but his hand had always been ready to take from his own pocket any sums that were required for a public benefit or a private distress. Indeed, he had carried his unselfishness in money matters further than was justified by his fortune. His inability to pay every claim in full was now a source of great grief to him. All the property which he could apply to the discharge of his debts was used for that purpose. The South American estate could find no purchaser. Chavaniac and its few remaining acres belonged to him; but various relatives had claims upon it. These persons were impoverished and had no other home; Lafayette left them in possession. Lagrange, which Mme. de Lafayette received as her share of her mother's estate, was not then the valuable property which it afterwards became; it was the only present means of subsistence for the family, and she retained her possession of it. The French creditors, acquainted with Lafayette's situation and alive to the difficulties caused by the financial disorders, were pleased with the settlements which he offered. As far as his countrymen were concerned, he was able to acquit himself of all obligations within two years with satisfaction to all parties.

But there remained a debt to Gouverneur Morris which differed in character from the others and requires a special investigation. In the summer of 1793, Mme. de Lafayette, knowing her husband's destitute condition in the Magdebourg prison, and being herself unable to afford him any assistance, sent her sister, Mme. de Montagu, to Morris, with a request for a loan on the part of the United States for the general's relief. It was natural at this time of distress, when her life was in danger, her property exposed to confiscation, and her credit destroyed, that she should look for help to that country in whose cause her husband had spent so much money and where he had unclaimed grants of land. Morris appreciated these circumstances. He had no authority to advance any money officially on the part of the United States, but he generously took the risk, and ordered his bankers at Amsterdam to give Lafayette a credit of ten thousand livres. Congress voted to repay this sum out of the salary which Lafayette had been entitled to in America. Morris, therefore, was secured from any loss in this transaction. Soon afterwards, Mme. de Lafayette was attempting to put the family affairs in order and to pay the debts which her husband's sudden departure had left. By sales of land and other property, she succeeded in clearing the estate of its principal obligations. Then other claims were presented, amounting to one hundred thousand livres. These latter were of a nature which the new laws regulating the payment of the emigrants' debts forbade Mme. de Lafayette to settle by the sale

of her husband's property. Thus she was in a dilemma. She was prohibited from paying the claims by the only means in her power, and had a legal right to ignore them. But she recognized them as none the less binding, and considered that Lafayette's honor would be compromised by default. As there still remained much property not confiscated, and as she expected to inherit a great deal herself, she had no doubt that in time the family means would be sufficient to meet every demand. Therefore, she applied again to Morris, asking him to be her "husband's endorser to that amount, in the name of the United States, before the National Assembly."<sup>1</sup> Morris could not take such a step in his official capacity, but taking pity on Mme. de Lafayette's situation, he very generously advanced the sum out of his private funds, taking her note for one hundred thousand livres. As Mme. de Lafayette was then in the shadow of the guillotine and the general's prospects not much brighter, Morris's loan had little chance of repayment. His conduct on this occasion did honor to himself and to his country.

Madame de Lafayette felt that she could rely upon America for the relief of her family, and it seemed likely that the last loan, like the first, would be provided for by the United States. In a letter which Morris wrote to Washington in 1794, he gave him an account of the matter, adding : <sup>2</sup> " Being hard pressed for an opinion of consolatory nature to these poor

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<sup>1</sup> Gouverneur Morris to Henri Labarte. *Diary and Letters*, ii., 409.

<sup>2</sup> *Diary and Letters*, vol. ii., p. 66.

children, I authorized the person employed to assure them of my conviction *that the United States would take care of them*. This I cannot doubt of, and I flatter myself that they may all of them be yet united at some future day in our hospitable regions, and that they will have cause to speak with gratitude of the bounty of America." After Mme. de Lafayette's release from the Paris prison in 1795, when she was on her way to join her husband at Olmütz, she met Morris at Hamburg and offered him a mortgage which would secure his loan. This offer Morris delicately declined.

After the return of Lafayette from exile, this debt became his most serious difficulty. It was the obligation which he was most anxious to discharge in full. Time was required to realize on his own and his wife's property, and further delays occurred, owing to his hope of being able to secure and dispose of the grants of land to which he was entitled as a major-general in the American army. Meanwhile, conferences took place regarding the debt between General and Mme. de Lafayette and Morris's agent in Paris. In all the financial proceedings which Lafayette was now conducting for the settlement of his estate, the *depreciation* of the currency was involved. Payments made in coin were universally regulated in accordance with calculations of the former and actual values of the assignats which were legal tender at the time of the contraction of the debt. Lafayette, like all his countrymen, being in the habit of taking into

account the matter of depreciation, applied to his debt to Morris the same principles which were recognized as proper in France. But Morris, in America, ignorant of his debtor's bankrupt state, and accustomed to a business atmosphere very different from that of France, became indignant. "This stickling for depreciation is quite shocking," he wrote to Leray de Chaumont, who then acted as his agent. Morris's personal dislike of Lafayette, which is constantly shown in his diary, made him too severe in his judgment of his debtor's conduct. Lafayette's record of integrity and disinterestedness should not be forgotten. He was doing his best to satisfy all his creditors. The sum of one hundred thousand livres loaned by Morris to Mme. de Lafayette had been paid to her in the assignats. Hence, it was not improper for a debtor who intended to pay in coin to consider what value the paper money had at the time of the loan.

The fluctuations of the assignats, according to Larousse, were as follows:<sup>1</sup> During the winter of 1792-93, their value fell thirty per cent. In June, 1793, one franc in silver was worth three francs in paper; in August, 1793, one franc in silver was worth six francs in paper. In December, 1793, the value had returned to nearly par, with considerable fluctuations. Immediately afterwards, a permanent but varying depreciation began. By June, 1794, the government printing-presses had turned out a circulation of seven milliards, not more than two milliards

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<sup>1</sup> P. Larousse: *Dictionnaire Universel*.

of which was secured by public lands. The assignats had then fallen to one-twelfth of their face value. In August, 1795, a louis d'or (twenty-five francs) was worth one thousand and twenty francs in paper. In October, a louis was worth three thousand francs in paper. In December, a louis equalled five thousand one hundred francs paper. In February, 1796, the louis equalled five thousand four hundred francs. In May, 1797, the paper had ceased to have any value. Morris made his loan to Mme. de Lafayette in November, 1793. He claimed that, at the time, he could have bought real estate in Paris at a price which would have made his assignats worth par to him. This was true, as revolutionary anarchy had depreciated the value of real estate. In a letter to Washington, of July 25, 1794, he said that, at the time of this loan, "the assignats were at par, or, indeed, for *silver*, under par."<sup>1</sup> There was, therefore, a reason for applying to this debt the same scale of reduction that was applied without objection to the French debts, especially as the Lafayettes had not the means to pay a hundred thousand livres in coin. Leray de Chaumont inquired of Mme. de Lafayette: "Suppose he [Morris] had made the useless ceremony to convert his assignats in lingots [bullion] to lend them to you; what would you pay now, lingots merely?" — "Yes."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Diary and Letters, i., 65.

<sup>2</sup> MS. letter, Leray de Chaumont to G. Morris, April 3, 1801. I owe the examination of other unpublished papers at Old Morrisania to the kindness of Miss A. C. Morris.

When Morris insisted that the assignats which he had advanced were worth par to him, as he could have invested them in real estate at that rate, Lafayette and his wife withdrew the claim for depreciation and proceeded with their efforts to pay as much of the debt as they could.

Their financial situation and their sense of their obligations to Morris appear in a letter which Lafayette addressed to Madison in October, 1802.<sup>1</sup>

“My dear Friend: had I not a proper reliance on the steadiness of your sentiments, I might fear you have forgotten the old friend who has not for many years received one line from you. But I conclude from the feelings of my own heart that your reciprocal affection to me has not diminished, and that through the vicissitudes of a life as stormy as it is now quiet, I have been accompanied with your interest and friendly wishes.” Lafayette then gives a detailed account of the course of the Revolution and the rise of Bonaparte’s power. “Bonaparte,” he continues, “is a man most exalted in glory, parts, and influence; but I want France to be a free republic. I, above all, am determined never to give up those principles which our friend Jefferson remembers my having, on the 11th of July, 1789, proclaimed in an assembly surrounded by royal troops—they were the principles of our American Revolution. I gave them as my manifesto

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<sup>1</sup> This letter, hitherto unpublished, is in the private collection of Mr. Theodore F. Dwight, late librarian of the State Department at Washington, to whose kindness I owe the use of it.

and my ultimatum, nor could my enemies, amidst their calumnies, ever point out the action, the expression, which, in the day of power, nor in the time of shipwreck, has deviated from them. And now, while I refuse my assent to the consolidation of an arbitrary system, I am taxed with a dangerous folly of patriotic dreams and disregard of public tranquillity. Let me therefore stick to my rural abode and agricultural pursuits. I live in an agreeable place, about forty miles from Paris. My children are with me. George has married the daughter of Tracy, whom Mr. Jefferson has known in the Constitutional Assembly, and who is one of his warmest admirers. My eldest daughter is the wife of Charles La Tour Maubourg, the younger brother of my Olmütz companion, and has two lovely little girls. My daughter-in-law is, within a few months, to increase our family. George is now in Turin, where the Eleventh Regiment of Hussars has been in quarters. Virginia, my younger daughter, will, I think, be married before long. The health of my wife, although it never can be perfectly restored, is now tolerably good. You know I am not very fond of money, yet I wish I had more of it. One-half of my fortune I had, with much pleasure to myself, employed in pursuits conformant to my principles and inclination. The other half has been almost entirely dilapidated and taken from me. The losses effected by our own decrees or those of a general nature I do not reckon. I found on my return a great number of creditors. They all, and every one of them, acted by



me with much delicacy, yet there was no proportion between my debts and my property. The share of my wife had also been much reduced, and the place of abode which she inherited was in great need of repairs and totally destitute of furniture. I found myself deeply indebted to Gouverneur Morris, who, in dreadful times, advanced for my wife a large sum of money; to Mr. Parish, the American consul, who made long advances for the subsistence of my family in the coalitionary captivity and until we were restored to our country. To other Americans I am also indebted. So that if I was to clear, as it is said, my fortune, I would be cleared out of everything I possess; for, admitting my debts paid off, there remain only, for each of my children, three thousand French livres a year, and for my wife and myself, besides our lodgement, six thousand French livres of net revenue, which, added to my military pension as a retired general, gives about five hundred guineas a year. I have, by exchanges with my neighbors, succeeded to surround the house and farm buildings with one whole tract of land, upwards of six hundred acres, — four hundred arable, the remainder woods, pasture, ground fit to be turned into meadow, vineyard, orchard, etc. Had I in my power a large sum of money, I might set up a profitable, and to me a delightful, farming establishment. My studies and my activity are now confined to those pursuits, and, indeed, I think I am able to practise with advantage; but, situated as I am, it is as much as I can do to begin the spring with one plough. It

would be in me unbecoming affectation to seem ignorant of the kind intentions of several friends of mine both in and about Government and Congress. With the same frankness I will tell you such measures, while they may be considered in my circumstances as necessary, are also, in my opinion and feelings, equally honorable and pleasing. So that, far from having the narrow objections of a misapplied vanity, I would now be as proud to receive the gifts of the free representation of the United States as I have, while I was rich, thought myself warranted in refusing them. There is another object of which Mr. Dawson and some other friends have repeatedly spoken and written to me; viz., the tracts of land given to each Continental officer and those which have been voted specially for me by the several States. I thought my best way was to apply to the house of our friend Dupont to make proper inquiries about it, and his sons have been desired by him and requested by me to consult you, and inform themselves respecting the actual state of things, of which I am perfectly ignorant. These confidential communications, my dear Madison, are to you an additional proof of my dependence on the continuation of your friendship. Be pleased to remember me most affectionately to Mr. Jefferson, who has, no doubt, received my letters, and to all other friends, particularly to the noble, heroic Huger, the man for whom my gratitude, love, and admiration shall last as long as my heart can beat. Adieu, my dear friend. Do you remember our Indian visit, some particulars

of which I have smiled at in the most gloomy days of a solitary dungeon?"

"From the last advices I have received," Morris wrote to John Parish in February, 1803, "it appears that M. de Lafayette means to liquidate what he owes me by something less than the interest of it. To do this he reduces the principal down pretty low by the scale of depreciation. God forgive him, and, if possible, reconcile him to himself. He must have odd notions, if, with the consciousness of facts, some mediation be not necessary between his mind and his conscience." Here Morris was unjust. Lafayette and his wife had withdrawn the question of depreciation on Morris's claim that his assignats had been worth par to him, and had been accumulating all their available means to pay their debt. The full payment was not a question of conscience, but of possibility. Lafayette, so reduced as to be able to begin his farming with but one plough, could not raise a hundred thousand livres. Morris finally realized this, and consented to take in settlement of his claim the fifty-three thousand livres in gold which the Lafayettes had scraped together. "You did well to close matters with my debtors," he wrote in May, 1804, to his agent Henri Labarte, "and I only wish them a clear conscience. Unhappily that they will not have, and will ever bear me, in consequence, a sincere hatred. The ungrateful man never thinks of his benefactor without a pang, and how should one not detest the object that causes such suffering and

lowers one in one's own eyes? Having pardoned the first wrong, I pardon the second in advance." This anticipatory forgiveness was not called for by the event. Lafayette was unconscious of having done Morris a wrong which it had been within his power to avoid, and he made use of every opportunity to recall and acknowledge the obligations under which his poverty compelled him to remain. When Sparks's edition of Morris's "Diary and Letters" was published, Lafayette wrote to Fenimore Cooper: "I have read the memoirs of the distinguished statesman to whose memory I am attached by the sentiments of youthful friendship, and by those of affectionate gratitude for the great services that he has rendered to my wife and to my children. Still I cannot deny that his communications to the royal family, in which he represented me as an ultra-democrat, too republican even for the United States, can be counted among the numerous causes which encouraged them not to listen to my counsels and to pay no attention to public opinion." Lafayette was before the public eye and subject to constant criticism for fifty-eight years. During that time no other complaint was made that his conduct in business matters erred otherwise than on the side of excessive disinterestedness. It seems unlikely that he should have been actuated in this case by any but the honorable intentions which controlled the rest of his long life.

Lafayette was thus settled at Lagrange, surrounded by his family, occupied with getting a living from his

land, and with raising money to pay his debts, when Bonaparte returned from his triumphs in Italy. The retired general had no feelings but those of admiration and gratitude for the man who was conferring such glory on France. "What is admirable above all, and to me the finest trait of his life," he wrote, "was the noble abandonment of the central post in Paris, where he had just placed himself, to cross the Alps to gain battles for the French people, — an impulse of the soul of which the glory belongs to him alone, and which has always excited such emotion in me, that I am still indignant at the thought that the same man believed himself exalted by an imperial mantle."

The intercourse between Bonaparte and Lafayette progressed for some time on a friendly footing. The latter was presented at the Tuileries in company with his friend La Tour Maubourg, and his reception reminded him of his first meeting with Frederic the Great. Bonaparte said, laughingly, "I don't know what the devil you had done to the Powers, but they found it very hard to let you go." A short time afterwards, when calling upon Talleyrand, Lafayette saw a man resembling the first consul, who was introduced to him as Joseph Bonaparte. The latter greeted him very cordially, and asked him to be present at an entertainment at Mortefontaine, on the occasion of the signing of the new treaty with the United States. Lafayette accepted this invitation, and passed at Mortefontaine two very interesting days. The presence of Americans and old military compan-

ions recalled the happiest days of his life, and he had several opportunities to converse at length with the first consul. The latter began one conversation by observing, "You must have found the French looking very coldly upon liberty." — "Yes," answered Lafayette, "but they are in a condition to receive it." — "They are much disgusted, the Parisians, for example; oh, the shopkeepers want no more of it!" Lafayette repeated his observation, adding, "It is not lightly, general, that I have used this expression; I do not ignore the effect of the crimes and follies which have profaned the name of liberty; but the French are, perhaps, more than ever in a state to receive it. It is for you to give it; it is from you that it is expected." Thus Lafayette made his position clear at the outset. Bonaparte showed no irritation, and continued discussing the political and military interests of France. Lafayette described the consul's conversation as marked by the simplicity of genius, by depth of mind, and by sagacity of perception. Bonaparte inquiring regarding the American war, Lafayette replied that "there the greatest interests of the universe were decided by encounters between patrols." Continuing, he spoke of a plan considered in America of establishing a life presidency. At this, Bonaparte's eyes sparkled. But when Lafayette suggested that a similar institution might serve in France if checked by such a national representation as existed in America, the consul said quickly, "You must admit that that would not do here."

Bonaparte was now pursuing the policy of reconciling the hostile parties of the Revolution, and of strengthening his own government by winning over royalists and Jacobins alike. He therefore began gradually to admit to France the emigrants and exiles of every stamp. The friendly terms which existed between him and Lafayette encouraged the latter to ask for the erasure from the lists of proscribed persons the names of many of his friends. These requests were all granted; and to Lafayette's great satisfaction, he was the means of restoring to their country his relatives, M. and Mme. de Tissé, besides many others.

But the amicable terms upon which he found himself with the new government immediately brought him face to face with a serious difficulty. Bonaparte wished to solidify his power by associating with his government the most prominent men of all parties. It was important that Lafayette should give a distinct adhesion to the new order by becoming a part of it. The first offer came through M. Cabanis, a member of the new senate, who, with other members of the old Gironde party, begged him to become a senator. Lafayette felt that he had a right to regard his public career as finished. Moreover, all the political principles of his life were opposed to the despotism which he saw being established. Therefore he replied to M. Cabanis, that having refused to the Jacobins in August, 1792, the sanction of his silence, he could not give to present measures the tacit approbation of coöperation. "Besides," he continued, "the inclina-

tion, or, if you wish, the fault, of my character, would cause me to adopt a course, which, called insurrection by the government, and temerity by the opposition, would place my friends between the embarrassment of sustaining and that of abandoning me." Therefore he refused to accept an office in which he could only oppose measures generally acceptable to the country; but he encouraged all his friends to take what part they could in the new government.

Soon after, Talleyrand offered to send him as minister to the United States. Domestic reasons alone existed sufficient to prevent acceptance of this. Then Talleyrand again pressed him to accept a seat in the senate. Lafayette laughingly pointed out the obligation under which he would be to denounce in the chamber the administration and its chief. General Dumas then requested a conference with him, and admitted that he had been charged by the first consul to seek an explanation of his disapproving, if not hostile, attitude. "Nobody likes to pass for a tyrant," he had said; "General Lafayette seems to consider me such." Lafayette replied that the silence of his retreat was the maximum of his deference; that if Bonaparte had been willing to be of service to liberty, he would have been devoted to him, but that he could neither approve nor associate himself with an arbitrary government.

Still the efforts to gain his active adherence did not cease. His name was placed on the list of general councillors of the Haute Loire and of other depart-



ments. But he procured its withdrawal by declaring to the ministers that he would always be like the child who persisted in refusing to say *A* lest he should be obliged to say *B* also. And to the council of the Haute Loire he wrote, that in his country-retreat he could do no more than form the most ardent wishes for external peace and internal liberty. As he was made an intermediary between many of his political friends and Bonaparte, his interviews with the latter continued, and the two had further intimate conversations. One of these turned on the Bourbons, and Bonaparte recounted gayly the many overtures which were made by their party through his wife. "They promise me a statue," he said, "by which I shall be represented delivering the crown to the king. I answered that I feared to be shut up in the pedestal." Lafayette replied that they would not let him off so easily. "You know," continued Bonaparte, "that for us this danger is nothing; but to restore them to power would be an infamous cowardice on my part. You may disapprove this government, think me a despot; we shall see; you will see some day whether I am working for myself or for posterity. . . . I am the master of this government, — I, whom the Revolution, whom you, whom all patriots, have placed where I am; and if I brought those people here it would be to deliver you all to their vengeance." "These sentiments were so nobly expressed," records Lafayette, "he spoke so well of the glory of France, that I took his hand and showed him the pleasure

that he gave me." On another occasion, speaking of the aristocratic party and foreign princes, Bonaparte said, "I am well hated and others also by these princes and their followers; but, bah! all that is nothing to their hatred for you. I have been in a position to see it; I would not have believed that human hatred could go so far! What the devil! did the republicans think their cause separate from yours? But now they do you justice, — oh, yes," he added significantly, "a complete justice!" In the following words Bonaparte acutely criticised the revolution of 1789: "General Lafayette, you have overthrown the strongest monarchy that existed. Look at all those of Europe! ours, in spite of its faults, was the best constituted. It was a fine and bold enterprise; but you made a great mistake in such a revolution to preserve the old dynasty; for, in denying it all power, the government could not work, and if you gave it power it would use that against yourselves. The problem was insoluble."

In the beginning of 1802, Lafayette heard one day that Bonaparte was irritated against his friend d'Arblay. He sought an interview, and smoothed the matter over so well that the consul declared that he "had nothing further against d'Arblay, and would see in him only the husband of <sup>his</sup> Cecilia." While they were thus confidential, Bonaparte said, laughingly, "You still feel yourself too active to be a senator?" — "It is not that, but I believe that retirement suits me best." Bonaparte was angry, bade him good-by, and

stepped to the door of his cabinet. Lafayette thanked him for a recent favor, and the consul returned and began again to converse amicably. "Allow me," said Lafayette, "to speak to you again on a point concerning which I do not wish to leave a wrong impression. I desire to repeat to you that after the circumstances of a stormy life, my shipwreck, and all that you know of me, you should find it natural and proper that I live as a simple citizen in the bosom of my family. I should already have asked for military retirement if I had not wished that my companions should attain it before me." Bonaparte then assured him that he could retire if he chose, and that his friends would be taken care of.

The genius of Bonaparte interested Lafayette so much, that he confessed that he took more pleasure in these interviews, as long ago in those with Frederic the Great, than he should have done in any intercourse with a despot. But this doubtful situation could not last long. Lord Cornwallis arrived in Paris early in 1802, to conclude the Treaty of Amiens. Lafayette met him at dinner at Joseph Bonaparte's, and discussed with him his own position. The next time Bonaparte saw him he said, sneeringly, "I warn you that Lord Cornwallis gives out that you are not cured yet."—"Of what?" answered Lafayette; "is it of loving liberty? What could have disgusted me with it? The extravagances and crimes of the tyranny of the Terror? They only make me hate still more every arbitrary system, and attach me more and

more to my principles." Bonaparte began again seriously, "I should tell you, General Lafayette, and I see with regret, that by your manner of expressing yourself on the acts of this government you give to its enemies the weight of your name." — "What better can I do?" replied Lafayette, "I live in retirement in the country, I avoid occasions for speaking; but whenever any one comes to ask me whether your system is conformant to my ideas of liberty, I shall answer that it is not; for, general, I certainly wish to be prudent, but I shall not be false." — "What do you mean," asked the consul, "with your arbitrary system? Yours was not so, I admit; but you had against your adversaries the resource of riots. I was only in the *parterre* when you were on the stage; but I observed carefully. Yes, to bring those . . . to reason, you had to get up riots." — "If you call the national insurrection of July, 1789, a riot," answered Lafayette, "I lay claim to that one; but after that period I wanted no more. I have repressed many; many were gotten up against me; and, since you appeal to my experience regarding them, I shall say that in the course of the Revolution I saw no injustice, no deviation from liberty, which did not injure the Revolution itself, and finally the authors of those measures." — "But will you not acknowledge," continued Bonaparte, "that in the state in which I found France, irregular measures were forced upon me?" — "That is not the question. I speak neither of the time nor of such and such an act; it is the tendency, — yes, general, it is the

tendency of which I complain and which afflicts me." Bonaparte ended the conversation by saying, "After all, I have spoken to you as the head of the government, and in this character I have cause to complain of you ; but as an individual, I should be content, for in all that I hear of you, I have recognized that, in spite of your severity toward the acts of the government, there has always been on your part personal good-will toward myself." This was Lafayette's position,—admiration and gratitude for the general, but high-minded opposition to the growing despotism of the consul.

This despotism, at first provisional, and as such justifiable, was now to be made permanent by means of the life-consulship. When this measure was put to the vote, the royalist party almost unanimously supported it as a return to arbitrary government. Some opposition was shown in the army, which was immediately punished by dismissals and the fatal exile to St. Domingo. Most of the contrary votes were Jacobin. The prominent men generally either voted "Yes," or did not vote at all. Lafayette considered that there should be no concealment about his position, and he publicly declared, "I cannot vote for such a magistracy until public liberty has been sufficiently guaranteed ; then I shall give my voice for Napoleon Bonaparte." And on the 20th of May, 1802, he wrote as follows to the consul: "It is impossible that you, general, the first in that class of men who, for comparison, include all centuries, should wish that such a

revolution, so many victories and prodigies, so much blood and suffering, should have for the world and for yourself no other result than an arbitrary system. The French people has known its rights too well to have forgotten them beyond recall ; but it is perhaps in a better condition to-day than in the time of its effervescence to recover them usefully ; and you, by the force of your character and the public confidence, by the superiority of your talents, of your existence, of your fortune,—you can, in reëstablishing liberty, master all dangers and calm all fears. Therefore, I have only patriotic and personal motives for wishing you, in this complement of your glory, a permanent magistracy ; but it belongs to the principles, to the engagements, to the actions, of my whole life, to wait before giving my assent to that magistracy, until it has been founded on a basis worthy of the nation and of you. I hope that you will here recognize, general, as you have already done, that to the perseverance of my political opinions are joined sincere wishes for yourself.”

As might have been expected, no answer was made to this letter. But Bonaparte yet remained friendly. When some of his courtiers were alleging that there had been none but Jacobin votes against the life-consulate, he objected, “No, some proceeded from enthusiasm for liberty, — Lafayette’s, for instance.” The separation between the two men was now, however, decisive. Lafayette justified his course by saying, “I have often been blamed for causing this entire

rupture ; but his determination and character left me no hope of being useful. The further he advanced in his baneful course, the more inevitable became the rupture ; and, besides, I could not see and foresee that total *ruere in servitium* of Tacitus, without feeling the overwhelming necessity that there should remain one point where the worship of liberty should be preserved without equivocation and without condescension."

During these two years, Lafayette was living at Lagrange, occupied with his farming, and making occasional visits to Chavaniac and to Paris. After the Peace of Amiens, which lasted from March, 1802, to May, 1803, many English Whigs visited France to see for themselves the results of the Revolution. Among these were Adair and Erskine, Charles Fox and his wife, Fitzpatrick, Lords Holland and Lauderdale, and the Duke of Bedford. Lafayette went to Paris to meet them, and passed much time in their society. He found their impression to be that a great deal of good had resulted from the first years of the Revolution, but that its subsequent excesses had ruined the cause. The meeting of Lafayette with his friends Fox and Fitzpatrick was enthusiastic. The many years and extraordinary events which had passed since they last saw each other made this meeting extremely interesting to all. Fox and Fitzpatrick spent some time at Lagrange. The former planted an ivy at the foot of one of the towers which formed the entrance to the *château*, and its proprietor watched

it grow until it covered the masonry and formed a notable feature of the scene. One day, Fox amiably begged Lafayette, in the presence of his son, not to be too much affected by the necessary delay in the attainment of his political objects. "Liberty," he prophesied, "will be born again, but not for us; for George at most, and surely for his children."

Soon after bidding farewell to his English friends, Lafayette was leaving the building of the Ministry of Marine, when his foot slipped on the ice, and he fell heavily on the pavement, breaking his hip-bone. He was assisted into a carriage, and taken to the house of M. and Mme. de Tessé, where his wife soon arrived. The character of the fracture led the physicians to expect a shortening of the leg and a permanently crippled condition. To avoid this result, they offered Lafayette the only alternative of undergoing the confinement of his leg in a newly invented machine, which might preserve its length, but would necessitate forty days of ceaseless pain. Lafayette resolved on this course, and for six weeks suffered excessive torture. The uncomplaining patience with which he bore the pain deceived the physicians. The bandages were too tight, and when they were removed the leg presented a sight which terrified the physicians and gave them little hope of saving the patient without amputation of the limb. The tension of the bandages had been so great that the flesh was deeply cut and part of the calf had to be removed. The physicians were greatly mortified at their error,



and this experience modified the future use of the new instrument. But Lafayette, notwithstanding the permanent injuries caused to him by the treatment, was well satisfied to have endured it, as his leg was not shortened, and a gradual improvement enabled him to take his usual daily exercise.

This accident and the sufferings entailed by it aroused much public interest, and gave Lafayette an opportunity to estimate the value of his friends' attachment. Many generals, senators, and councillors visited him openly and in uniform. Among these, Moreau, Joseph Bonaparte, and Bernadotte were unremitting in their attentions. Some only ventured to inquire for news, others to ask their friends, and others again only to listen to such accounts as they heard given in public. Bonaparte's change of feeling was now shown. Having inquired the name of an officer at a parade, and being told that it was the young Lafayette, he exclaimed, "It is his son," and passed on.

During his convalescence, Lafayette learned of the acquisition of Louisiana by the United States. In the letter which he had written to Madison in 1802, he had said that in view of his impoverished condition, he would no longer decline to receive the grants of land which belonged to him as a veteran of the American war. His friends in the United States had not been backward in seeing that he obtained his just dues. In 1794, while he was in captivity, he was placed on the army list at full pay, an advantage

which had belonged to him by law for fourteen years, but which he had never claimed. The land-grant which fell to his lot as major-general had likewise not been accepted. In 1803, Congress voted to him, on the banks of the Ohio, eleven thousand five hundred and twenty acres which belonged to his rank. The next year Congress authorized the President to assign the land in any part of the public territory he chose, and a tract in the newly acquired Louisiana was selected, near what is now the city of New Orleans. Both political parties united in these measures, which were passed unanimously. In announcing to Lafayette the action of Congress, Jefferson begged him to leave "a land trembling beneath his feet," to enjoy in Louisiana a tranquil happiness, and to lay there the foundation of an immense fortune. He was further informed by Messrs. Livingston, Munroe, and Armstrong, then representing the United States in France, that the government of Louisiana was destined for him. But there were reasons both private and public for the declination of the various inducements which were then held out to attract him to America. His wife's health made the journey impossible for her, and Lafayette felt that the predominant interest of his life must keep him in France. As long as he saw men about him who had not renounced the hope of political liberty, he could not discourage the cause by separating himself from its dangers. The actual benefit accruing to his purse by the grant of land in America amounted to almost nothing. In

1806, his agent took possession of the Louisiana property ; but the next year, by an extraordinary mistake, Congress granted a considerable extent of land to the city of New Orleans for the construction of fortifications, and this land included nearly the whole of Lafayette's estate. The latter was then worth about fifty thousand dollars, and the general could undoubtedly have contested his title with success. But no sooner had he heard of the claims of the city of New Orleans, than he wrote to his agent that " he would never consent even to examine the validity of his title, that he would never think of entering into a discussion with any public body in the United States, that the property had been freely given by them, and that it was for them to say what had been given." The property thus lost to him was restored in another form in 1824.

The general longing in France for a permanent government had well aided the plans of Bonaparte. Lafayette's foresight was justified, when in May, 1804, the life-consul became the Emperor Napoleon, and was firmly established on the most powerful and despotic throne in Europe. In the following September, when Lafayette was visiting at Chavaniac, the last, and a very seductive, attempt was made to secure his passive adhesion to the government. His cousin and friend, that Comte de Ségur who had shared his intention in 1776 to fight for American independence, and who had now become Bonaparte's Grand Master of Ceremonies, wrote that he had an important message

from Joseph Bonaparte. "The Prince Joseph," he explained soon after in Paris, "likes to attribute your retreat to philosophic sentiment only, but he sees with regret and fear that his brother considers it a state of hostility. Prince Joseph's friendship for you urges him to put an end to this situation. He regrets that you were not willing to be a senator ; only your name was desired ; you need not have left La-grange. His present plan can still less be excepted to — it is for you to become one of the dignitaries of the Legion of Honor ; for your military career in America and Europe is an accomplished fact, of which this is only a consequence so well adapted to your retreat, that a refusal would indeed amount to hostility ; but before proceeding further, he has wished to assure himself that you would not refuse." Lafayette began his reply, when Ségur begged him to take time for reflection. The next day he said, "I am much touched by the good-will of the Prince Joseph. Let me be permitted to observe to him, that, in my singular position, this grand cordon (for I see clearly that you will come to that) would seem to me a ridiculous thing. It might do very well to accompany a public employment. But it becomes me best to hold no office ; and to be only of the Legion of Honor becomes me all the less that this is only the chivalry of an order of things contrary to my principles. Therefore, I shall not accept it. The meaning assigned to my retirement is strange, especially when the imperial power is compared to my small means. But, if it

became indispensable for me to be something, I should object least to the senate, where, however, my opinions would oblige me to incur more justly the emperor's reproach. I, therefore, ask from his brother's friendship the cessation of all these propositions." Ségur carried back this answer, and Joseph Bonaparte declared his intention of obliging Lafayette in accordance with his wishes.

The refusal of Lafayette to accept office with its accompanying advantages of wealth and influence under the Consulate and the Empire was not a mere negative sacrifice to his principles. Bonaparte revenged himself on his silent opponent, and Lafayette, whose happiness was now centred on the career of his only son, saw that career blasted as a punishment for his steadfast attachment to the cause of liberty. In the days of friendly intercourse between himself and the first consul, reference was frequently made to the military successes of George. But as Bonaparte grew in power, and resented the refusal of the father to join his government, the son was visited with constant injustice. During his years of service, he had been constantly at the post of danger, had been twice wounded, and twice recommended by his superiors for promotion. But while courtiers and their friends were promoted without cause, George was never allowed to rise above a lieutenancy. At last his position in the army, as that of Lafayette's son-in-law, Louis Lasteyrie, was made untenable, and both were forced to resign. Offers were made by friends to intercede with the

emperor to prevent such injustice, but the young men realized that success could only result from a surrender on the general's part, and to that they could not agree.

Lafayette confined himself more and more to Lagrange. At the end of 1805, his separation from the world of Paris had become so complete that he was not in a position to offer any congratulations to the emperor after his return from the great victories of Ulm and Austerlitz. While all France was dazzled by the brilliant star, while the old Jacobins and the old aristocracy abandoned their standards to seek the favors of the imperial court, he took pleasure in his own isolation. For the military triumphs of Bonaparte he had the greatest sympathy, and each new victory flattered his national pride. But he was well content that others should bask in the imperial sunshine while he nourished the hope of returning liberties. Under his assiduous care, Lagrange became productive, and the *château* acquired new comforts for the patriarchal life of the family within. Trophies and relics of the American and French Revolutions kept alive the memory of the past, while portraits of Franklin, Washington, Bailly, Laroche foucauld, Fox, and many others reminded him of the precious friendships of his life.

It was when thus occupied with domestic affairs and surrounded by his children and grandchildren that occurred his great grief. At the end of October, 1807, the health of Mme. de Lafayette, permanently impaired

by her past imprisonment, failed altogether. After a severe illness, in which she was watched with the utmost devotion by her husband and children, she passed away. In the following January, Lafayette paid the following tribute to her memory in a letter to Maubourg: "During the thirty-three years of a union in which her tenderness, her goodness, the elevation, the delicacy, the generosity, of her soul charmed, embellished, and honored my life, I felt so accustomed to all that she was for me that I did not distinguish it from my own existence. She was fourteen years old and I sixteen when her heart merged itself into all that interested me. I believed that I loved her, that I needed her; but it was only in losing her that I could discern what part of myself remained for the rest of a life which had seemed given up to so many distractions, and for which, nevertheless, neither happiness nor comfort is any longer possible. The presentiment of her loss had never struck me as that day, when, on leaving Chavaniac, I received an alarming note from Mme. de Tessé; I felt myself pierced to the heart. George was frightened by an impression which he thought more serious than the danger. Arriving very quickly at Paris, we saw that she was very ill; but an improvement occurred the next day, which I attributed somewhat to the pleasure of seeing us again. . . . Although I can say that she was attached to me by the most passionate affection, never have I perceived in her the slightest shade of exaction, of discontent — never anything which did not afford the most free

career to all my enterprises ; and, if I look back to the time of our youth, I find in her the traits of a delicacy, of a generosity, without example. You have always seen her share with heart and mind my opinions, my political views, rejoicing in all that could reflect any glory upon me, more still in all that made me, as she expressed it, thoroughly known ; rejoicing above all when she saw me sacrifice opportunities for glory to a good sentiment. Her aunt, Mme. de Tessé, said to me yesterday, ‘ I never would have believed that any one could have been so fanatical on the subject of your opinions and so exempt from party-spirit.’ Indeed, never did her attachment for our doctrines for an instant alter her indulgence, her compassion, her kindness for people of another party ; never was she embittered by the violent hatreds of which I was the object, the injurious conduct and speech of others toward myself, — all were follies indifferent to her eyes because of the point of view whence she regarded them, and because of the height where her good opinion wished to place me. You know, as I do, all that she was, all that she did, during the Revolution. It was not to have come to Olmütz, as Charles Fox said, on the wings of duty and of love, that I wish to praise her here, but not to have set out until she had taken the time to assure, as far as she could, the comfort of my aunt and the rights of our creditors ; it is that she had the courage to send George to America. What noble imprudence of heart to remain almost the only woman in France compromised by her name who



would never change it !<sup>1</sup> Each one of her petitions or reclamations began with the words, *The woman Lafayette*. Never did this woman, so indulgent for the hatreds of party, allow to pass without protest, even when beneath the scaffold, a reflection upon me ; never an occasion to uphold my principles without proudly taking advantage of it and saying that she had them from me. She had prepared herself to speak in the same manner to the tribunal ; and we have all seen how thoroughly this woman, who was so elevated and courageous in great situations, was good, artless, yielding in the ordinary intercourse of life, — too yielding, even, and too good, if the reverence which her virtue inspired had not made up of all this a manner of life altogether apart. Her religious devotion, also, was exceptional. I can say that, during thirty-three years, I have not experienced from it for an instant the shadow of discomfort ; that all her practice was unaffectedly subordinated to my convenience ; that I have had the satisfaction of seeing my most incredulous friends as constantly welcomed, as much loved, as much esteemed, and their virtue as completely recognized as if there had been no difference of religious opinion ; that never has she expressed anything but the hope that on further reflection, with the honesty of heart which she knew to belong to me, I would end by being convinced. Such recommendations as she left to me were of the same kind, begging

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<sup>1</sup> In 1793, the wives of most of the emigrants procured pretended divorces to save part of their fortunes and to assure their own safety.

me for the love of her to read some books (which assuredly I shall examine again with sincere reflection), and calling her religion, to make me love it better, *the sovereign liberty*, in the same way that she repeated to me with pleasure the saying of Fauchet, 'Jesus Christ my only master.' It has been said that she preached a great deal to me. That was not her way. She often expressed to me, in the course of her delirium, the thought that she would go to heaven, and dare I add that this idea did not reconcile her to leaving me? She said to me several times, 'This life is short, troubled. . . . Let us unite in God; let us pass eternity together.' She wished me and all of us the peace of God. Sometimes she was heard praying in her bed. One of these last nights, there was something heavenly in the manner in which she twice recited aloud a hymn applicable to her situation, — the same one that she had repeated to her daughters on catching sight of the towers of Olmütz."

The remains of Mme. de Lafayette, by her own desire, were buried in that part of Cemetery of Picpus called the Cimetière des Guillotinés, where the bodies of her grandmother, mother, and sister lay confounded with those of sixteen hundred other revolutionary victims.

The married life of Lafayette was not the least noteworthy feature of his life. First entering the world at the corrupt court of Louis XV., the influences of his early surroundings tended to inspire him with that disregard of the marriage-tie which was so

prominent a social feature of the expiring monarchy. But the natural inclination toward a higher life, the spirit of constancy which marked his youth as well as his age, made him reject the pleasures of his young companions, and fixed his devotion upon his wife. Her beauty, love, and sympathy merited all the tenderness which any man could bestow. She had been the worthy companion of the soldier and the statesman, sacrificing every convenience to his interest, and brightening his life with a domestic happiness which made all calamities easy to bear.

Doubling his pleasures, and his cares dividing,

she had been to him so much that years could not temper the loss. Among her last words to him had been, "*Je vous fus donc une douce compagne, eh bien ! bénissez moi !*" These words were engraved on a gold medallion containing her portrait, which he always wore attached to a chain around his neck. Every morning of his life, before leaving his bedroom, he passed a few moments in the contemplation of this portrait. His wife's room at Lagrange was always kept as she left it, and there he never failed to pass the anniversary of her death alone with his memories.

Thus, in his country retreat, Lafayette passed through the period of the Empire. The news of Bonaparte's colossal victories and the subjugation of Europe found him occupied with his crops and his sheep. It took no little courage to have thus main-

tained his attitude of disapprobation and his avowed hopes of future liberty in the face of the all-conquering imperial power. While even the most bitter partisans of the old *régime* crowded Bonaparte's court and watched eagerly for a smile from the master, the solitary opposition at Lagrange was in constant danger. Bernadotte, about to depart from France to wear the crown of Sweden, took leave of Lafayette. "Your existence," said Napoleon's marshal, "is truly miraculous; your peril lies less in the character of the emperor than in the implacableness with which the people of the old *régime* seek to irritate him against you." Though out of Bonaparte's sight, he was never forgotten. The emperor's chief political dread was the growth of liberal ideas. And of these Lafayette was an ever-waving standard. Napoleon's attacks on what he called "ideaology" were frequent. One day, a discussion having arisen in his council about the reëstablishment of the National Guard, he fiercely assailed the men and institutions of the Revolution. "Gentlemen," he concluded, "this is not aimed at you; I know your devotion to the power of the throne; everybody in France is corrected. I was thinking of the only man who is not — Lafayette; he has never retreated an inch. You see him quiet now; well, I assure you that he is ready to begin again." The Napoleon who caused the Duc d'Enghien to be kidnapped on the soil of a friendly foreign power, to be carried across the frontier and shot in the night, was not the man to recoil before the destruction of the defence-

less republican of Lagrange. But while to murder the Duc d'Enghien was only to fling a savage gage of war to the Bourbon family, to lay a violent hand on Lafayette was to offend the masses of the French people, who yet cherished the Revolution as their day of emancipation.

In the attitude of courageous independence maintained by Lafayette during these years is to be seen an important growth in his character. In his past history we have noticed that power, place, and honors were gratifying to him as a satisfaction to his ardent thirst for glory. Sometimes he seemed even to mistake the outward signs of greatness for greatness itself. No trace now remained of an imagination to be dazzled by titles, nor of a vanity to be pleased by ribbons. Although burdened with debt, with no resource against poverty but his farm, he refused the wealth and the high office that Bonaparte held out as a bait for the sacrifice of principles. Even that "grand cordon" of the Legion of Honor, which involved no open retreat from his position, was yet rejected as the first step which might lead to a second. He now knew that on the maintenance of his character and principles his fame must depend, and that orders and honors would only tarnish it. Thus he sacrificed every private interest, saw the military careers of his son and son-in-law cut short for the sake of those principles for which he had lived. The proud nobility of the old *régime*, forgetting their exiled king, crowded the court of the Corsican tyrant, eagerly contending for posts in his

civil and domestic service ; but Lafayette was not there. The Jacobin regicides rallied about the new master ; but Lafayette was not there. While so many prostrated themselves, he stood erect. Louis XVIII., in his English country-house, took up the " *Moniteur* " day after day to read mournfully the names of the new members of his nobility who were accepting the titles and service of the usurper ; but Lafayette was still at Lagrange waiting for liberty.

Strengthened as he was in character by age and experience, Lafayette, at fifty, was still young, and had not outgrown all the unthinking impulses of his youth. On the Fourth of July, 1812, the thirty-sixth anniversary of American Independence, he wrote a letter of congratulation to Jefferson, enlarging with unqualified satisfaction on the lately received news that the colonies in South America had declared their independence. Washington, thirty years before, had warned his young friend against too hasty espousal of an apparently good cause. Now Jefferson qualifies the enthusiasm of the veteran revolutionist : " I sincerely join in your wishes for the emancipation of South America. I have little doubt that it will succeed in throwing off a foreign yoke. But the result of my observations does not authorize me to think that these provinces are capable of establishing and preserving a free government." Lafayette, no doubt, accepted this qualification, but he would not have been the first to think of it. As Bonaparte said, he was not yet cured.

## CHAPTER VI.

1814. — Fall of Napoleon, and Restoration of the Bourbons. — The Hundred Days. — Course of Lafayette in the Representative Assembly of 1815. — Napoleon's Second Abdication. — The Second Restoration of Louis XVIII. by the Allied Armies. — Course of Lafayette towards the Government.

THE treaty of Tilsit, made in July, 1807, followed Napoleon's great victories of Eylau and Friedland, by which Prussia was crushed and Russia changed into an ally. Then the emperor's power reached its height. No European nation dared to contest his supremacy. Since the fall of Rome, no such dominion had been known. The sovereign of France, of Northern Italy, of Eastern Germany, he had turned Spain into a dependency, and seated his brothers on the thrones of Holland, Naples, and Westphalia. For five years this power remained apparently unimpaired, and its most extraordinary result was seen in 1812, when the modern Cæsar set out for the invasion of Russia with an army of five hundred thousand men, gathered from half the nations of Europe to march under his imperial eagles. In Dresden, where he stopped in May, old Europe came to lay its submission before him in the persons of the kings who wore their crowns only during his pleasure. But one nation yet stubbornly and successfully resisted him, — England still swept the seas, but she felt severely

the effects of the commercial war waged by Napoleon through his Continental System.

But in the immensity of the domination lay the source of weakness. The Empire hung on the life and abilities of one man. His soaring ambition might overleap itself. His death might shatter the keystone, without which the edifice must fall into ruin.

The Continental System, which impoverished the commerce of France and Germany, as well as of England, was borne only so long as the iron hand compelled. The mourning households from which brothers and sons had gone one after another to perish on the battle-field yet sent what manhood remained, so long as death came under victorious eagles. The subjugated monarchs of Europe paid their court submissively to the all-powerful and all-conquering emperor. But how long would the commercial classes submit to ruin, how long would the stream of men pour from the fields and the workshops, how long would conquered peoples bear the yoke, when defeat instead of victory fell to the master's lot? When Napoleon left the fifty thousand men who remained of that grand army of half a million whom he had led into Russia, and hastened in disguise through Germany to Paris, he was received in ominous silence. Yet more, the news of his death having spread abroad, the emperor found that even his servile official creatures had no thought of finding in his son a successor to his crown. No fact could be more significative of the insecurity of the



throne which overawed Europe. Russia and Germany moved forward to attack their crippled adversary. Napoleon once more drew on the almost exhausted resources of France, and with another grand army scornfully advanced on his often-defeated foes. The battle of Leipsic in October, 1813, and the desertion of his allies, drove Napoleon to the Rhine while Wellington was invading France from the south. The exhausted country could no longer furnish unlimited supplies of men and arms. Although the genius of Napoleon still dealt prodigious blows at the advancing armies, the odds were too great, and the allies occupied the hills about Paris in March, 1814. Meanwhile the supports of the imperial throne had been weakened by intrigue, discontent, and fatigue. When Bonaparte repeatedly humbled the monarchs of Austria and Prussia, their subjects had clung to them with undiminished fervor as their legitimate rulers. But Bonaparte had been the sovereign of France only by merit of his genius and his sword. Now that the one was clouded and the other broken, the volatile French people fell away from the glorious usurper. Weary of war, satiated with military glory, demoralized by years of despotism, impoverished by the Continental System, the French readily bartered Napoleon for peace. On the 30th of March, Paris capitulated, and on the 4th of April Napoleon Bonaparte, alone in his palace at Fontainebleau, abdicated a throne from which the last courtier had fled.

As the allies were advancing, Lafayette was called

to Paris by the illness and death of his relatives, M. and Mme. de Tessé. At the approach of the storm which now threatened his country, he was tormented by his own powerlessness to oppose either the foreign enemy or the domestic tyranny to which he ascribed the impending evils. His son George and his son-in-law Lasteyrie enlisted in the National Guard, while his other son-in-law, Maubourg, entered the regular army to assist in the defence of Paris. Lafayette had no faith to break, no loyalty to abandon, in seeking the overthrow of Bonaparte. Having accepted no favors nor honors from the despot, he was only pursuing his consistent course in endeavoring to obtain from the public calamities the benefit of deliverance from the tyranny of the Empire. He went from friend to friend, trying to form a party to "tear" the abdication from Bonaparte and to defend the country against the enemy. But fear, confusion, and weakness everywhere prevailed. As the allies entered Paris, he shut himself in his room and wept. But he could not remain in entire obscurity. The King of Prussia having heard that Maubourg had been taken prisoner, ordered his release and sent word of his action to Lafayette. The latter called to express his thanks, and was kindly received. A little later he had opportunities of meeting the Emperor of Russia in the *salon* of Mme. de Staël, and had several intimate conversations with him. Most of these dealt with the United States, now the only power in a state of war with England, and Lafayette sought to induce the emperor to act as

mediator. The question of slavery was also discussed, and Lafayette received several testimonies of the emperor's regard.

The Bourbons had accompanied the allies, and Louis XVIII. was now by them placed on the throne. The people silently acquiesced, although the family, now restored by foreign arms, was quite forgotten by the masses. While the negotiations were in progress, Lafayette again met the Emperor of Russia at Mme. de Staël's. The latter called him into the embrasure of a window, and there, in low tones, lamented the lack of vigor and patriotism which he had found in France, and commented with misgiving on the fact that the Bourbons were returning as obtuse and illiberal as ever. Lafayette replied that misfortune should have corrected them. "Corrected!" said the emperor, "they are uncorrected and incorrigible. There is only one, the Duke of Orleans, who has any liberal ideas! but from the others expect nothing at all."

The truth of the emperor's words was only too soon evident. The Bourbon government was confronted with great difficulties, but it was its own worst enemy. The memory of the people did not extend back to the old monarchy; Louis XVIII. and his family were strangers to them. The circumstances attending the Restoration associated the reigning family with national defeat and humiliation. Instead of conciliating parties and giving the country the internal peace in which it might find consolation for its late misfortunes, the

Bourbons aroused new animosities every day. The old imperial army was deprived of its eagles, its tri-color, and its accustomed organization. The officers were neglected and made to feel that faithful service under the Empire gave no claim to the approval of the Restoration. Louis XVIII. and his family thought that they could preserve sufficient influence over the army by favors to the marshals. But even these were alienated by insults not the less wounding that they were flung with the delicate insolence of the old *régime*. One day, when the victories of Ney had been enthusiastically commented upon, a courtly duke condescendingly observed to the marshal, "What a pity that you have not, like one of us, what a man cannot give to himself!" An English lady asking a countess the name of a pretty woman present, "I know none of those women," she replied, "it is the wife of a marshal." Not content with alienating the army, the Bourbons made every effort to exalt the very class which the French people desired to see in a subordinate position. The memory of the old tyranny of the clergy had not died out. Under the Empire, the Church had a respectable, though not a controlling, position. The Restoration restored it to much of its ancient predominance, and the priesthood excited widespread indignation by its exaggerated pretensions. New laws and taxes were placed in operation in such direct opposition to the principles which the people had come to cherish as the permanent results of the Revolution, that the political lethargy of the nation

was aroused, and it only awaited an opportunity to rise against the new tyranny.

When Louis XVIII. was established on the throne of his ancestors, Lafayette presented himself once at court to pay his respects to his new sovereign. To the Comte d'Artois, whose playmate he had been in boyhood, he wrote a civil letter of welcome. He called upon the Duke of Orleans, afterwards Louis Philippe, who spoke in so liberal a manner that Lafayette thought that he saw in him the only member of the royal family compatible with a free constitution. He then retired to Lagrange, and watched the course of events. From his post on the little Island of Elba, in the Mediterranean, the extraordinary man, whose ambition had so shaken the civilized world, was watching, too. The effect of the political course of Louis XVIIIth's government was perceived by him with unerring accuracy. While the ministers thought France steeped in content, he knew that the country was seeking a deliverance. On the 1st of March, 1815, he landed on the shores of Provence with a few hundred soldiers of his old Guard to conquer an empire. He had not misjudged the situation. As he advanced, the country rose to him; the cities opened their gates; the soldiers sent to oppose him rallied under his eagles; Louis XVIII. fled across the frontier.

When the news of Napoleon's landing was received in Paris, George Washington Lafayette made all haste to Lagrange to inform his father. The general set

off at once for Paris. "He brought with him only opposition to Napoleon," said Benjamin Constant; "his attitude was soon known. We asked him if, in the line of his opinions, we could count upon him; he unhesitatingly devoted himself to the cause." "I had no faith in the conversion of Napoleon," said Lafayette himself, "and I saw better prospects in the awkward and pusillanimous ill-will of the Bourbons than in the vigorous and profound perversity of their adversary." A reunion of the prominent men who favored a constitutional monarchy was gathered together in Paris to concert means to oppose the Restoration of the Empire. Among those present were M. Lainé, the president of the Chamber of Deputies, Lally Tollendal, Chateaubriand, De Broglie, and Benjamin Constant. Lafayette was called to attend, and was asked his views on the measures to be pursued. His thoughts were still at 1789. "I advised an immediate summons of the members of all the National Assemblies since 1789 who could be found in Paris. I wished to oppose a great moral force to the physical force already declared in favor of Bonaparte. I added that it would be prudent to ignore the king's nephews, and to make use of the Duke of Orleans, the only popular prince. My advice excited only fear and suspicion. M. de Chateaubriand proposed that we should all gather about the king to be butchered at his feet, that our blood might become a seed whence, some day, the monarchy might arise again. Benjamin Constant laughed at the compensation that

was offered us." Constant's laugh showed plainly enough that Lafayette was out of place in that reunion. Between the arbitrary empire and the arbitrary monarchy, there was no choice for him.

Bonaparte reëntered the Tuileries with a new realization of the strength of liberal opinions in France, and immediately made such concessions as he thought would bring the supporters of political liberty to his side. He agreed to a constitution, and established a Senate and a Representative Assembly elected by popular suffrage. Unfortunately, his long career of despotism cast such doubts on his sincerity that the liberal party had no faith in the permanence of the political freedom thus obtained, and began an immediate opposition. By a wave of enthusiasm, and by the disgust inspired by the Bourbons, Napoleon had been replaced on his throne. But the causes which led to his repudiation in 1814 were still operative. The nation no longer desired his rule, and hated the renewed warfare which that rule necessitated. Victory might restore his power, but defeat would leave him again without a friend.

Lafayette was elected to a seat in the Representative Assembly. Having no confidence in the sincerity of the emperor's liberal professions, he now directed all his efforts and all his influence over the other deputies to establishing the permanence of the liberties already conceded, and to arouse a spirit of independence which would make the Assembly the voice of a free people and not a mere "Napoleon Club."

The allies, who were quarrelling at Vienna over the division of the spoils of 1814, were furious at the return of the emperor from Elba, forgot their animosities before their common enemy, and hastily organized their vast armies for a new invasion of France. From that country, stripped of its materials of war only the year before, the genius of Napoleon raised an army of six hundred thousand men, of whom one-third were ready for the field. But it could not be such an army as he formerly led to victory. The ranks were filled with raw youths, the equipment was inferior, the old spirit was wanting. The generals who commanded under the emperor, fatigued by their long years of service, weakened by age, wearied by endless war, longed only for a peace in which to enjoy the honors and riches already won, and displayed a fatal lassitude. The last splendid efforts of Napoleon ended on the 18th of June in the rout of Waterloo. The commanding figure, which from the heights had directed the movements of that extraordinary conflict, saw his last grand army yield to superior force. Among the scattered thousands who fled before the victorious cavalry, he was recognized by his familiar cloak, riding slowly, with his head bent on his chest, as if courting death by the swords of the infuriated pursuers.

That defeat alone could not have laid France prostrate before her enemies, had not internal dissensions and revolution paralyzed her energies. The weakness of the Empire, resulting from its depend-



ence on the mind of one man, was immediately evident. The army had to be rallied, Paris calmed, and the forces of France put forth in all their strength. Napoleon was obliged to leave his troops to be rallied by others, while he hastened to the seat of government to set in motion the machinery which could not move without his impulse. At eleven o'clock of the evening of June 20, he alighted at the palace of the Elysée, overcome with fatigue and grief. "The army had accomplished prodigies," he said, in a painful tone, to the Duc de Vicence, who received him; "a panic seized it; all is lost. . . . I am exhausted. . . . I must have some hours of repose before I can begin my work again." Placing his hand on his heart, he said, "I suffocate there." A little later he continued, "My intention is to unite the two Chambers in an imperial sitting. I shall describe to them the misfortunes of the army; I shall ask from them the means of saving the country; then I shall depart again." — "Sire," answered Caulaincourt, "the news of your misfortunes has already transpired. There reigns great agitation in the public mind; the disposition of the deputies appears more hostile than ever. I regret, sire, to see you in Paris; it would have been better for you not to have separated yourself from the army." — "Still," said Napoleon, "I hope that the Chambers will second me, and will feel the responsibility about to rest upon them. The majority is good; it is French. I have against me only Lafayette, Lanjuinais, Flaugergues, and some others; I am in

their way ; they wish to work for themselves ; I shall not allow them ; my presence here will keep them down.”<sup>1</sup>

But Napoleon was mistaken. It was not only Lafayette and a few other Liberals who opposed him ; the whole Chamber of Deputies was hostile, and longed to be rid of the emperor whose throne had for so long meant only ceaseless sacrifice and war, and now necessitated efforts of which the depopulated country thought itself incapable and knew itself unwilling. Napoleon soon found that the general apathy and despair reigned even in his council. Before sleeping, he had ordered for the early morning a meeting of his ministers. When these, together with his brothers Lucien and Joseph, were seated about the council table, the Duke of Bassano read the bulletin of the battle of Waterloo. Then Napoleon began with his old vigor : “ Our misfortunes are great ! I have come to repair them, — to impress on the nation, on the army, a grand and noble movement. If the nation rise, the enemy will be crushed ; if, instead of levies, of extraordinary measures, we only dispute, all is lost ! The enemy is about to enter France. To save our country, I need to be clothed again with a great power, with a temporary dictatorship. In the interest of the country, I could seize this power myself ; but it would be useful and more national that it were given to me by the Chambers.” These inspiring words were received in significant silence. The ministers, interro-

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<sup>1</sup> *Mémoires de M. Fleury de Chaboulon.*

gated in turn by Bonaparte, replied in non-committal or discouraging terms. Regnault (de St. Jean d'Angély) ended his remarks by saying that he feared that a great sacrifice was necessary. "Speak clearly," said the emperor; "it is my abdication that they want, is it not?" — "I believe it, sire. However painful this duty may be for me, I ought to enlighten your Majesty upon its true situation. I shall even add that it would be possible that if your Majesty did not abdicate of its own accord that the Chamber would dare to demand this sacrifice." Lucien Bonaparte declared that the emperor alone could save France; that if the Chambers should refuse their support, he ought to declare himself dictator, put the country in a state of siege, and call all patriots to the defence of the national soil. "I hope that the presence of the enemy on the national soil," resumed Bonaparte, "will restore to the deputies the knowledge of their duties. The nation did not send them to overthrow, but to support, me. I fear nothing for myself, but I fear everything for France. If we quarrel among ourselves, all will be lost. The patriotism of the nation, its hatred of the Bourbons, still offers us immense resources; our cause is far from hopeless." The emperor then detailed with extraordinary lucidity the military resources of the country and the means of defence. But although he raised the hopes of his councillors, he could not arouse their enthusiasm.

At noon of that day, the 21st of June, the Chamber began its session. The deputies were already in a

state of violent excitement. The regicide, Fouché, who, as Minister of Police, had attended Napoleon's council, and who now added new treacheries to all that he had committed before, spread consternation among the deputies by his statement, "All is lost! France has no longer an army." He increased the disorder just before the session by writing to several members, "He is furious and intends to drive out the peers and the deputies! He is going to seize the dictatorship." The same alarming rumors were tacitly confirmed by the gloomy silence and excited conduct of the other ministers. The enemies of Bonaparte were beside themselves with fury, the rest of the deputies overcome with despair.

In the morning of the 21st, Lafayette was informed by several persons that Napoleon had returned, was preparing to dissolve the Chambers and to seize the dictatorship. He hastened out, and found Regnault (de St. Jean d'Angély), by whom this news was confirmed. He declared that he would anticipate the emperor. When the session was declared open by the president, Lafayette rose and entered the tribune. His appearance there added to the excitement. "Sinister rumors have been in circulation," he said; "they are unhappily confirmed. This is the moment for us to rally about the old tri-color standard—that of 1789, that of liberty, of equality, and of public order; that is the only standard that we have to defend against foreign pretensions and domestic attacks."

He then presented to the Assembly five resolutions.

The first declared the independence of the nation to be threatened. The second declared the Chamber permanent, and made its dissolution high treason. The third thanked the army. The fourth reinstituted the National Guard. The fifth summoned the ministers to attend the sitting of the Chamber. These resolutions were open to the serious criticism that, in the face of an invading army, they practically led to a revolution and change of government. But the Assembly dreaded more its dissolution and a new dictatorship than it did the allied armies. The resolutions were passed unanimously, except the fourth. When a copy of them was handed to the emperor he perceived their full import. "I should have adjourned this Chamber before my departure," he said; "it is about to ruin France." Then he added, "Régnauld did not deceive me; I shall abdicate if I must." He sent Régnauld and Carnot to the Assembly and the Chamber of Peers to announce that he had left the army to concert with them the measures necessary for public safety. Meanwhile, the Assembly remained in a highly excited condition, and some members began to regret the resolutions. One of them thus addressed Lafayette: "I could understand what you have just done if you had personally strength enough, on the one hand, to repress interior counter-revolutions, and, on the other, to stop the progress of the enemy. But do you forget, in the position where we are, the support of Napoleon is the pledge of our independence, and that his fall renders inevitable the

triumph of the foreigner and the return of the Bourbons? What do you want? What do you hope?" — "Fear nothing," replied Lafayette, who thus voiced the feeling which, whether right or wrong, was now almost universal; "when we are rid of him, everything will arrange itself."

Régnauld and Carnot returned from the Chambers, where they had carried the emperor's message, and reported to him the continued hostility which prevailed there. Soon the news came that the deputies were discussing the appointment of a commander-in-chief other than himself. Napoleon had nothing new to learn from the treatment he was now receiving. Having experienced at the height of his power all the servility of which human nature was capable, he had known in 1814 the full extent of treachery, desertion, and meanness which could follow on misfortune. Almost alone in his palace, overcome with the fatigue and grief of the lost battle, longing to save France from her enemies, yet regarded by the representatives of France as her worst enemy, he seemed to abandon himself to disgust and lassitude. Leaving the Council Chamber, he descended into the garden with his brother Lucien. When the crowds gathered in the streets perceived his familiar figure, the air was filled with loud and unceasing cries of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" The masses had a juster appreciation of the situation than the Assembly; they thought only of the approaching enemy, and of the man who could oppose it. The cries changed from "*Vive l'Empereur*" to

demands for arms. Napoleon was silent. At last Lucien said, "Well, you hear these cries; they ask for arms; they wish you to direct the national forces. It is the same throughout the Empire. Will you abandon France to the factions?" Napoleon stopped, waved his hand to the cheering crowd, and answered: "Am I more than a man to recall to that union which alone can save France five hundred deluded deputies? Or am I a miserable party-chief uselessly to light the fires of civil war? No, never! Let the attempt be made to recall the Chambers; I ask no more. With them I can do everything; without them I can do much for my own interest, but I could hardly save the country. Go to them yourself; I give my consent to that. I forbid you, however, to harangue, as you go, this people which asks me for arms; I am ready to attempt everything for France; I wish to attempt nothing for myself."<sup>1</sup>

The Assembly, meanwhile, had continued in a state of tumult, waiting to proceed with business until definite news should arrive from the government, growing with every hour more excited and more ready to listen to the party of Lafayette, who loudly demanded the forfeiture of the imperial crown. It was six o'clock in the evening when Lucien appeared in the tribune. The sight of this envoy could not fail to call to mind that it was he who, in 1799, had violently dissolved the Assembly of the Cinq Cents and placed Napoleon in the consulship. When he had delivered

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<sup>1</sup> *Vérités sur les Cent Jours, Lucien Bonaparte.*

his speech, the violence of the outcries for some time prevented any voice from being heard. At last other members spoke; but their words were fatal to Lucien's mission. M. Jay declared that public liberty could not be established in France under a military chief; that the foreign powers having declared that their invasion was only against the person of Napoleon, France should no longer continue a vain struggle. "Return to your brother," he continued; "tell him that the Assembly of the representatives of the people await from him a resolution which will do him more honor in the future than all his victories; tell him, that in abdicating power, he can save France; tell him, finally, that his destiny pursues him fast; that in one day, in one hour, perhaps, it will be too late! I ask the nomination of a commission charged to demand from Napoleon his abdication, and to announce to him that in case of refusal the Assembly will pronounce his forfeiture." This address was received with loud applause. Lucien again ascended the tribune and, in eloquent words, begged the deputies to support the only man who could drive back the enemy. "Consider," he ended, "that our safety depends on our union, and that you cannot separate yourselves from the emperor and abandon him to his enemies without destroying the State, without violating your oaths, without blasting forever the national honor!" At this Lafayette rose and addressed Lucien: "You accuse us of failing in our duty to our honor, to Napoleon! Have you forgotten all that we have done



for him? Have you forgotten that the bones of our children, of our brothers, everywhere attest our fidelity, — in the sands of Africa, on the shores of Guadalquivir and the Tagus, on the banks of the Vistula, and in the frozen deserts of Muscovy? During more than ten years past, three millions of Frenchmen have perished for a man who, to-day, still wishes to contend against all of Europe! For him we have done enough! Now our duty is to save our country."

Meanwhile, Napoleon was discussing the situation with Benjamin Constant. "It is not myself that is now in question," he said, "it is France. They wish me to abdicate. Have they calculated the inevitable results of this abdication? It is about me, about my name, that the army is grouped; to take me from the army is to dissolve it. If I abdicate to-day, in two days you will have no army. This army does not understand all your subtleties. Do people suppose that metaphysical axioms, declarations of rights, discourses from the tribune, will prevent a disbanding? To reject me when I disembarked at Cannes, I could have understood; to abandon me to-day, I cannot understand. It is not with an enemy a few miles distant that a government is overthrown with impunity. Do people think that the foreigners will be deceived by phrases? If I had been overthrown ten days ago, there would have been courage in it. But now I am a part of what Europe is attacking; therefore I am a part of what France should defend. In surrendering me, she surrenders herself, she avows her weakness,

she acknowledges herself vanquished, she encourages the audacity of the conqueror. It is not liberty that deposes me ; it is Waterloo, it is fear, — a fear by which your enemies will profit." As Napoleon thus spoke, he was walking up and down the gardens of the Elysée with Constant. Although night had fallen, the streets, buildings, and trees overlooking the gardens were packed with men. Every time that the figure of Napoleon came in sight, the crowd gave vent to tremendous shouts of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" "You see," he said to Constant. "Those are not the people that I have loaded with honors and with riches ! What do they owe me ? I found them poor and I left them poor. But the instinct of nationality enlightens them, the voice of the country speaks by their mouths, and if I wish it, if I permit it, in one hour the rebellious Chamber will exist no more. But no, the life of a man is not worth this price ; I did not return from the Island of Elba that Paris should be drenched in blood."

The commission appointed by the Assembly to consider the measures to be adopted met in the council chamber of the Tuileries at eleven o'clock that night. Besides the ministers, there were present MM. Lanjuinais, Lafayette, Dupont, Flaugergues, and Grenier from the Assembly, and the Counts Andreossy, Boissy d'Anglas, Dejean, and Thibaudeau from the Peers. When the meeting opened, the ministers presented their plans for military movements, making no mention of Napoleon. Lafayette maintained that the

ministers did not go far enough ; that the basis of the deliberations must rest on the necessity for the country to make *every sacrifice* except constitutional liberty and territorial integrity. Every sacrifice included the abdication of Napoleon. This was discussed at length. Lafayette insisted that the evident will of the Assembly demanded the abdication. Lucien Bonaparte asserted that the emperor's friends would be the first to ask for his abdication if they believed it essential to the safety of France. "That," exclaimed Lafayette, "is speaking like a true Frenchman. I demand that we all go to the emperor and tell him that, after all that has passed, his abdication has become necessary to the interests of the country." The president refused to allow such a motion. The night passed in fruitless discussions, in which, however, the party hostile to Napoleon showed the most strength. Before separating, the commission empowered the ministers to proceed with the military preparations, and recommended that the Assembly name commissioners to negotiate directly with the allied powers. Thus ended the 21st of June.

The Assembly met again at nine o'clock in the morning of the 22d. The general sentiment prevailing among the deputies was, that the allied powers were making war on the person of Bonaparte, and that he alone stood between France and peace. After much tumultuous discussion and loud threats of forfeiture, the Assembly gave Napoleon an hour in which to abdicate. The emperor saw clearly that with his

fall the army would cease to exist and that the country would stand at the mercy of the allies; and he still passively resisted. His brother Lucien urged the dissolution of the Chambers, but even the ministers, loaded as they were with past favors, advised only submission. In accordance with the same thoughts he had uttered the night before in the gardens of the Elysée, Napoleon signed a new abdication in favor of his son. "The Assembly," says Lafayette, "without considering the young Napoleon, solemnly accepted, in the name of the French people, the abdication of Napoleon Bonaparte, and caused him to be thanked for it by a deputation composed of the president and secretaries. It was an imposing spectacle, the arrival of these nine representatives of the people, strong by the respect due to a National Assembly, and going to announce to him, who, after having dominated all the sovereigns of Europe, and who still commanded the French army, to his guard, and to a strong party from the faubourgs, that he was no longer emperor, and that the nation resumed the government." Such a spectacle might have been imposing had the nation been able to resume the government instead of stumbling again into miserable failure. Napoleon received the deputation with the calm dignity and noble demeanor which were his remarkable characteristics in misfortune. The Chambers concluded the work of the day by nominating a Commission of Government, consisting of five members, in which the executive power was vested. This Commis-

sion elected Fouché as its president. Thus, at a time when foreign armies, flushed with unaccustomed victory, were hastening toward Paris, the sword was struck from Napoleon's hand. The dictatorship asked for by the great emperor that he might defend the national soil was given to Fouché, his Minister of Police, — a regicide who had deserted the emperor to serve Louis XVIII., who had deserted Louis XVIII. to act again as Napoleon's minister, who had used his office as a means of betraying his fallen master, and who grasped his new authority in order to betray his country into the hands of the enemy. Fouché's Commission of Government established itself at the Tuileries, and Napoleon retired to Malmaison, where, in the early days of his greatness, he had lived with Josephine.

Lafayette had expected to be a member of the Commission of Government, but the opposition of the partisans of Napoleon and of Louis XVIII. defeated his election. He was then made one of the commissioners about to be sent to make peace with the allies. "I had cause for discontent," he says; "many things in my new situation displeased and repulsed me; I would have much preferred to remain to put forward some good articles of constitution which would have been adopted sooner or later, to exert myself to assist in the defence, and to put the nation in motion. Still I accepted the mission of plenipotentiary; many of my friends assured me that I could be useful in that way." Before leaving Paris he had an interview with

Fouché, already in absolute control. Fouché gave the commissioner instructions to insist on the rejection of Louis XVIII. as a necessary condition of peace, and then the new ruler of France turned again to his desk to finish an interrupted letter to Louis XVIII., in which he promised to deliver France into his hands.

The avowed reason of the Assembly for demanding the abdication of Napoleon was that the allies were attacking him only. The commissioners sent to make peace on the strength of the abdication soon found that the supposition of the Assembly, as Napoleon had repeatedly said, was altogether false. The allies were as furious with France for receiving Napoleon at his return from Elba as they were with Napoleon himself. The Emperors of Austria and Russia refused to see the commissioners, and limited their politeness to sending their servants to wait upon them. At last the commissioners succeeded in obtaining an interview with the representatives of the allied sovereigns at Haguenau. There they declared that Napoleon and his family having been deposed, no obstacle remained to a truce for the arrangement of a permanent peace. But the allies had not come so far for so little. They soon showed that Paris must be theirs, that France must be totally subdued, that all the fruits of Waterloo must be gathered, before they would deign to dictate the terms of peace. In the course of the conferences, Lord Stewart said to Lafayette, "I should warn you, sir, that no peace with the allied powers is possible unless you deliver Bonaparte to us."—"I am much

astonished," indignantly replied Lafayette, "that to propose to the French people so cowardly an act you should have addressed yourself to a prisoner of Olmütz." The uselessness of the negotiations was soon apparent. The commissioners returned to Paris only to find that Fouché had left the city defenceless by sending the French army to a distance, and had signed a disgraceful capitulation.

When Lafayette and his fellow-commissioners had gone to seek the allies, when Fouché was established in the Tuileries as executive chief, that Assembly which had torn the crown from Napoleon resumed its labors. So long had the despotism of the Empire weighed upon France that the power of self-government was lost. So long had intelligent men been in submission, that now, with their turn of political power, they lost their heads completely. The deputies, rejoicing in the return of the sovereignty of the people, could think of nothing but making a constitution. While the enemy advanced, while Fouché conducted his intrigues for the restoration of Louis XVIII., the Assembly was solely occupied with the terms and the phraseology of abstract declarations of the rights of men. When these useless declarations, destined to be forgotten the next day, were successively voted, the deputies became mad with enthusiasm and hugged each other with tears of joy. These proceedings continued day after day, while enemies without and traitors within decided the fate of France. In vain a member would cry, "But the English are coming!" His

warning was met by cries of "*Vive la nation ! Vive la liberté ! Haine au despotisme ! Que l'ennemi vienne ! Maintenant nous pouvons mourir !*" Meanwhile, the allies had taken possession of Paris, and the streets had become the camping-ground of their soldiers. During the night of July 7, Louis XVIIIth's new Minister of Police contemptuously caused the assembly chamber to be locked, and stationed a guard about the building with orders to allow no one to enter. When the deputies arrived the next morning to continue their constitutional labors they were turned away without ceremony amidst the jeers of the crowd. Lafayette, just returned from his mission, was among the number. He invited the deputies to hold a meeting at his house. About two hundred attended, but could only issue a vain protest. Paris was filled with the troops of the allies, the white flag of the Bourbons had replaced the tri-color, Fouché was awaiting his reward, and Napoleon, who had foretold all, was on the way to his last exile.

The conduct of Lafayette in 1815, as in other crises, is open to serious criticism from a political point of view. He shared the opinion of the Assembly that it was Napoleon alone that the allies attacked—a mistake which cost the country dear. He wanted in judgment in seeking a complete change of government at a time when only the union of all the resources of the State could ward off a foreign conquest. In seeking to obtain political liberty for his country by the destruction of Bonaparte at this moment, he was characteris-



tically considering abstract good instead of immediate expediency. But in his treatment of Napoleon as a man, his conduct stands out in most favorable contrast to that of other prominent men. Of all those whom the emperor had ennobled, enriched, and loaded with favors, hardly a half-dozen had not deserted him, and had not sought the favor of the Bourbons by reviling him or denying their attachment to him. History presents no more disgusting examples of human baseness than the conduct of the officials and courtiers who left Napoleon at Fontainebleau in 1814 to lay their submission at the feet of Louis XVIII., who greeted Napoleon on his return from Elba with protestations of their uninterrupted hatred of the Bourbons, and who returned again to Louis XVIII. to make amends for the Hundred Days by insulting the exile of St. Helena. Lafayette had acted in 1814 and 1815 with honesty and consistency. During the years of the Consulate and the Empire he had refused every favor, and had maintained an attitude of opposition fraught with danger and involving painful self-sacrifice. In aiding the overthrow of Napoleon, he had no opinions to recant, no obligations to forget. He aimed at the despot, not at the man. His admiration for the great soldier never diminished, and before setting out on his mission to the allies, he had done what in him lay to assure the escape of Napoleon to neutral territory.

But Lafayette is not free from the responsibility which rests on the Assembly of 1815 for allowing the executive power to fall into the hands of Fouché, and

the consequent humiliations and disasters of France. When Louis XVIII. had been replaced on his throne, it was thought necessary to make an example of some of the men who had received Bonaparte on his return from Elba. The persons whose banishment was ordered were directed to learn from Fouché, whose treacheries had been rewarded by a portfolio, the place of their exile. Carnot,<sup>1</sup> one of Fouché's colleagues on the Commission of Government, was among the number. He entered the office of Fouché, exclaiming with fury, "Where do you wish me go, traitor?" "Wherever you please, fool!" was the answer. And the return of Louis XVIII. in 1815, against the will of France, was brought about by the fact that the responsible men who were not traitors cannot escape the accusation of folly. The despotism of Napoleon had blunted the political judgment of individuals, and his fall left the country helpless.

The well-known opposition of Lafayette to the restoration of Louis XVIII. made him an object of hatred to the royalist party; but as he had been the opponent of Bonaparte also, there was no excuse for visiting upon him the vengeance which attained so many actors in the Hundred Days. He retired again to Lagrange, and remained in entire seclusion for four years. Under the careful management of its owner, Lagrange had now become a profitable estate. The general had devoted himself to agriculture with the same enthusiasm which had characterized his public

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<sup>1</sup> Ancestor of the present President of the French Republic.

career. The family means were small, but sufficient. Lafayette's children, now all married, lived with him, and twelve grandchildren played about the castle, or pursued their education under his eye. True to his principles, he lived on very democratic terms with the neighboring peasantry. In his youth, the tenants of Chavaniac had always paid their respects to him on their knees. The Revolution had changed all that; but Lafayette went much farther than custom exacted. He labored to instil in the minds of the peasantry the same independence and self-respect which he had formerly admired so much in the laboring classes in America. His charities were continual,—in times of famine nearly ruinous,—and made him extremely beloved. Though now about sixty years of age, his mind and body had still the vigor of youth. He was stouter than of old, slightly lame in his injured leg, but his thick, reddish hair showed hardly any signs of gray.

The course of the Bourbon government and the royalist party continued to be in direct opposition to the wishes of the country. Unjust taxation, the limit of the suffrage to the rich and noble, the suppression of the liberty of the press, the exaltation of priestly authority,—all objects obnoxious to the people,—were pursued with blind determination. The introduction of every possible ceremony and institution of the old monarchy, the excessive pride of the returned *émigrés*, the pretensions of the clergy, aroused a bitter animosity against a throne already associated in the public mind with national humiliation and foreign dic-

tation. For a few years the brothers of Louis XVI. were to occupy his throne ; but they were ceaselessly undermining it by attempting to stamp out the results of the Revolution in which he had perished.

In 1819, Lafayette was elected a member of the new Assembly, and for four years he boldly opposed the successive usurpations of the government. But the Assembly had too little power to check the progress of the crown toward an arbitrary system. Other measures were needed, and these were sought by the liberal party in conspiracy and insurrection. In the struggle now progressing, Lafayette devoted himself unreservedly to the cause of political freedom, of which he continued to be regarded as the champion. It may be urged with much justice that in 1815 he had sought political freedom at the expense of national safety, that he had thought only of liberty when the real issue was the expulsion of the foreigner. But now the struggle was solely between the rights of the people and the arbitrary assumptions of the throne. During the next four years, his property and his life were cheerfully placed in jeopardy. "Bah !" he replied to the cautions of friends, "I have already lived a long time, and it seems to me that I would worthily crown my political career by dying on a scaffold in the cause of liberty." That his life was not thus terminated was due more to good fortune than to prudence.

In 1820, the government attempted to pass their electoral law, which limited the ballot to the ten or twelve thousand principal proprietors of the country,

— a measure which would have established an oligarchy more objectionable than the nobility of the old *régime*. “This law,” said Lafayette to his friends, “is a declaration of war to the death against the Revolution; the royalists wish to have done with the principle of liberty and equality. We have no longer any resource against this party and its attacks but that of resistance by gun-shots. But the active assistance of the departments is necessary to any attempt in Paris; could we not ascertain their feelings and try to organize some movement there?” Similar thoughts had been in the minds of his hearers, and the suggestion was immediately acted upon. Various associations established through the country for the maintenance of liberty, such as the “Union” and the “Friends of the Freedom of the Press,” were communicated with and eagerly gave their adhesion. Committees were established in the principal cities, and organizations were formed in the provinces which communicated with the Central Committee in Paris, of which Lafayette was the chief. The military in the large cities was won over. It was arranged that the garrison in the *château* of Vincennes, near Paris, should rise at a signal, deliver the fortress to the insurgents, and make it the seat of a provisional government. The night of August 19 was fixed upon for the rising. But an explosion in the *château* unsettled the plan and led to its discovery. The conspirators separated, only to renew their efforts the next year.

The organization of the opposition kept pace with the tyrannical course of the government. In 1821, the society of the Charbonnerie had attained a formidable strength. It was divided into branches called "Ventes," the central "Vente" in Paris having supreme authority over all the others. As before, the controlling spirit was Lafayette; his life-long devotion to the cause of freedom, his solitary opposition to the despotism of the Empire, his readiness to fight in the cause, the very lack of prudence which made him accessible to the conspirators at all times, marked him as the natural leader of the opposition. Toward the middle of December, 1821, the plans for the new insurrection were matured. The signal was to be given at the towns of Neuf-Brisach and B  fort, the garrisons of which were to hoist the tricolor and rouse the neighboring country. Mulhouse, Metz, Nancy, and Strasbourg were to follow. The communications between Alsace and Paris were to be cut, and a provisional government, consisting of Lafayette, d'Argenson, and Koechlin, was to be established at Strasbourg. The 24th of December was the anniversary of the death of Mme. de Lafayette. That day the general always consecrated to her memory and passed in her room. In order to observe this custom, he left Paris for Lagrange, where he awaited the signal for his departure for Alsace. The night of the 29th was first assigned for the rising, but various accidents occurred to delay it till the 1st of January. As soon as word reached Lagrange,

Lafayette entered his travelling-carriage. His son George, attached to his father by the closest bonds of confidence and affection, accompanied him on the journey which might conduct both to the scaffold. When the general saw his old servant Bastien enter the carriage he felt some compunction. "Bastien," he said, "George and I are about to risk our heads; I ought to warn you that in accompanying us you may be risking your own." — "I know it, general," replied Bastien, "I know what we are about to do; but don't let that disturb you; I am going on my own account; moreover, these opinions are also mine."

While Lafayette was on his way to Alsace, while the leaders of the insurrection at B fort were dining together in a room decorated with tri-color flags and rejoicing over the excellent prospects in view, an untoward accident in the neighboring citadel destroyed their projects at a blow. The troops of the garrison were in the plot. On the night of January 1, according to agreement, their guns were loaded and their knapsacks packed ready for a campaign. The hour was rapidly approaching for them to take possession of the citadel and begin the conflict in which the populace of B fort and the other cities were prepared to join. But, although all the soldiers and some of the officers were in the secret, the officers of the highest rank in the garrison were not so. The adjutant, Tellier, one of the conspirators, had called together all the sergeants and given them the orders to make ready the troops, which had been duly exe-

cuted. But it happened that one of the sergeants had but that moment returned from a leave of absence. The fact was not noticed, and no information was given him. He placed his own company in readiness, and then, to testify to the zeal for duty with which he had returned to the regiment, he sought out his captain and informed him that his orders had been executed, that the guns were loaded and the knapsacks packed. The captain was playing cards with a fellow-officer. Neither was in the plot. They were astonished at the sergeant's report, interrogated him regarding the execution of orders which had never been given, and suspecting something wrong, hastened to inform their superiors of what had occurred. The commanding officer feared an attack on the city from without. The troops were held under arms before the eyes of their officers, and the gates of the city were closed ; not in time, however, to prevent the escape of many of the principal conspirators. Two of these hastened to meet Lafayette, then known to be on the road to B  fort. They were in time to stop him. He ordered the carriage to take another road leading to the town of Gray, where he alighted at the house of a friend named Martin. Here he passed several days, in order to make this visit appear the object of his journey.

The rising at B  fort being awaited by the other cities, its failure was known in time to prevent any other outbreaks, and thus to conceal from the government the extent of the contemplated insurrection.



So much difficulty was experienced in collecting evidence of the conspiracy, that very few trials took place, and the punishments inflicted were light. The government made every effort to implicate the leaders, especially Lafayette ; but the secret was well kept. Lafayette's complicity was certain, but the efforts of the witnesses to shield him contradicted what evidence was gained, and a conviction appeared too uncertain to be attempted. An investigation by the Chamber of Deputies was then contemplated ; but Lafayette so boldly challenged a public comparison of his own and the government's course during the last three years, that the ministers shrank from their task. Failing in their hopes of vengeance, the royalists, by intrigue and bribery, succeeded in preventing the General's return to the Assembly in 1823.

## CHAPTER VII.

Last Visit of Lafayette to the United States, in 1824.

DURING the forty eventful years which had passed since Lafayette's last visit to America, his interest in the United States and his attachment to his old friends there had never diminished. After the death of Washington, Jefferson became his most regular correspondent, and kept him informed of the course of events. In the misfortunes of himself and his family during the Revolution, American sympathy had rendered substantial aid. Washington, Morris, Munroe, Madison, Pinckney, Jay, Huger, and many others had spared no pains to return the favors of 1776 and 1781. Invitations to revisit the scenes of his youthful glory had frequently reached the general after his return from Olmütz and during his retirement under the Empire. Family and political reasons had then interposed.

In the beginning of 1824, he was invited by President Munroe, in accordance with resolutions of Congress, to visit the United States as the guest of the nation, and he was informed that a man-of-war would be sent to France for his use. Lafayette, although sixty-seven years of age, did not recoil from a voyage of three thousand miles in a sailing-vessel. He accepted the invitation, but declined the offer of a





war-ship. He took passage in the "Cadmus," an American merchantman, Captain Allyn, and sailed from Havre on the 13th of July, 1824, accompanied by his son George and his secretary, M. Levasseur. The French government took strict precautions to prevent a popular ovation on his departure. But as he went on board the "Cadmus," the American vessels in the harbor were gayly decorated, and their salutes gave an intimation of the welcome which was preparing across the seas.

The "Cadmus" came to anchor off Staten Island on the 15th of August. The guest who disembarked from her and the people who so eagerly awaited him had changed much in forty years. To Americans, Lafayette was a tradition, a survivor of a glorious, but almost extinct generation, a reminder of the struggles and triumphs which most strongly moved the national imagination and pride. In the honors which they were about to pay to him were included the great names of the men who had built up the Republic, and the principles which made its enduring foundation. In the popular mind, Lafayette was still "the marquis" of 1780, and, like the old lady in Philadelphia, people were anxious to see "that good young man" again. His old friends who still survived, instead of the slight and active figure, the ruddy and youthful face, which they remembered, saw a large, stout man, slightly lame, with heavy and strongly marked features, surmounted by a thick growth of curly reddish hair. His appearance had changed more by the accumulation of

flesh than by the effects of age. Never handsome, he was now decidedly plain ; but the dignity and kindness of his manners and the benevolent expression of his face made a pleasing impression. The old friendliness and enthusiasm were unimpaired, and hard experience had brought wisdom without harshness. On the other hand, those thirteen colonies for whose cause the youth of twenty had crossed the seas to fight, had become twenty-four independent and united States. Their population had increased from three to twelve millions. Their progress in agriculture, commerce, and manufactures had been commensurate. The sterling qualities of the new nation were to be seen in the wildernesses converted into farms, in the home-made ships which enterprise despatched and hardihood guided through every sea, in the backwoods settlements grown into flourishing towns built around the church and the school-house. Here liberty reigned in company with order ; here wisdom, honesty, and self-control had established a free government under which men could live.

The visit of Lafayette occupied a little more than a year, during which nearly every town in the United States became a scene of unprecedented festivity. The route pursued by the nation's guest gave him a complete view of the country already settled. From New York he proceeded through New Haven and Providence to Boston ; thence to Portsmouth, N.H., by the old colonial road through Salem, Ipswich, and Newburyport. Returning to New York by way of

Lexington, Worcester, Hartford, and the Connecticut river, the steamer "James Kent" conveyed him to the familiar scenes on the banks of the Hudson. From New York he travelled through New Jersey to Philadelphia, thence to Baltimore and Washington. Proceeding southward, he visited Mt. Vernon, Yorktown, Norfolk, Monticello, Raleigh, Charleston, and Savannah. The beginning of April, 1825, found him at New Orleans, whence he ascended the Mississippi and Ohio rivers, sailed up Lake Erie, saw the Falls of Niagara, passed through the new towns in the State of New York to Albany, thence across Massachusetts as far as Portland, Me. Returning by Burlington, Vt., Lake Champlain, and the Hudson river, he reached New York in time for the great celebration of the Fourth of July, 1825. Another and longer visit to Washington brought the tour to an end in September.

The whole of this long journey was a triumphal progress. Cities and towns vied with each other in the length of their processions, the brilliancy of their balls and public dinners; through the rural districts the population lined the road along which the general passed under arches surmounted with "Welcome, Lafayette!" At every stopping-place an orator expressed the feelings of his neighbors in language heartfelt, if florid; every surviving revolutionary soldier became the great man of his community. The festivities and celebrations of that year had no precedent in the annals of the country. There resulted the coining of a new word, and for many years afterwards whenever ex-

traordinary honors were paid to any individual, he was always said to have been "Lafayetted." The animosities of party were supplanted by an enthusiastic patriotism which, in recalling the achievements of the past, gave an impulse to those of the future.

Lafayette made three visits to New York. On his arrival there on board the "Cadmus," he was conveyed to the Battery from Staten Island on the "Chancellor Livingston," escorted by the "Robert Fulton," the "Connecticut," the "Oliver Ellsworth," and the "Nautilus," gayly decorated and carrying bands of music. At the Battery he entered a carriage drawn by four horses, and amidst the salutes of cannon from the vessels and forts proceeded to the City Hall in a long procession of military and civilians. After the ceremonies at the City Hall, he held a public reception, which was succeeded on the following days by a series of dinners and other entertainments. When he returned from Boston, his birthday, the 6th of September, was celebrated by a ball at Castle Garden, which was long remembered by the inhabitants as the most brilliant that the continent had seen. A distinguished party, which included the widow of Alexander Hamilton and other ladies, accompanied him on the "James Kent" to revisit the historic scenes on the Hudson river. His third visit was on the Fourth of July, 1825, when a sermon, the reading of the Declaration of Independence, and a procession filled up a memorable day.

At Boston, he was met by a detachment of militia under Josiah Quincy, taken to the State-House



through cheering crowds, harangued, and dined. The military of Boston and the neighboring towns, under the command of Gen. James Appleton and General Lyman, were reviewed on the Common. He attended a Commencement at Harvard College and visited the scenes connected with the Revolution. The next year he was present at the laying of the corner-stone of the Bunker Hill Monument and heard the great oration of Daniel Webster. "Fortunate, fortunate man!" exclaimed the orator turning toward him,—"with what measure of devotion will you not thank God for the circumstances of your extraordinary life! You are connected with both hemispheres and with two generations. Heaven saw fit to ordain that the electric spark of liberty should be conducted, through you, from the New World to the Old; and we, who are now here to perform this duty of patriotism, have all of us long ago received it from our fathers to cherish your name and your virtues. You now behold the field, the renown of which reached you in the heart of France and caused a thrill in your ardent bosom. You see the lines of the little redoubt, thrown up by the incredible diligence of Prescott, defended to the last extremity by his lion-hearted valor, and within which the corner-stone of our monument has now taken its position. You see where Warren fell, and where Parker, Gardner, M'Cleary, Moore, and other early patriots fell with him. Those who survived that day, and whose lives have been prolonged to the present hour, are now around you.

Some of them you have known in the trying scenes of the war. Behold, they now stretch forth their feeble arms to embrace you! Behold, they raise their trembling voices to invoke the blessing of God on you and yours forever!"

The same series of balls, public dinners, speeches, and processions greeted Lafayette at Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Savannah. At Charleston, his old Olmütz friend, Colonel Huger, was joined with him in the demonstrations of popular regard. At Yorktown, a great military celebration took place, in the course of which a box of candles was discovered which had formed a part of Cornwallis's stores, and which furnished the light for the evening's entertainment.

Lafayette first arrived in Washington in October, 1824. He was met by a deputation of twenty-five young girls dressed in white and an escort of military. After a formal reception at the Capitol, he proceeded to the White House. President Munroe sat at the end of the room, with Adams, Crawford, Calhoun, Southard, Jesup, members of his cabinet, and officers of the army and navy. As the guest of the nation entered, all rose, and the President advanced and welcomed him in the name of the United States. After some days of festivity, Lafayette left Washington for visits to other places in the vicinity.

During his absence, Congress met and received the President's message which commented on Lafayette's past services, the enthusiasm of his reception by the

people, and recommended that a provision should be made for him worthy of the character and greatness of the American people. Committees were immediately appointed to report on this recommendation. Senator Hayne described how the rights belonging to his military rank had never been claimed by Lafayette, how the land conceded to him in 1803 had afterwards been granted through a mistake to the city of New Orleans, and in a short time a bill was reported and unanimously passed, ordering the treasurer of the United States to pay him the sum of two hundred thousand dollars. On his return to Washington, he was informed of this vote by committees from both Houses; Congress received him in state, and an address of welcome was spoken by Henry Clay.

During his long journey through the States, Lafayette passed through thousands of miles of wilderness, and had several opportunities of renewing his old acquaintance with the Indians. The friendliness with which he had inspired the savages during the Revolution was the result of that sympathetic humanity which always characterized his dealings with men. Although the enthusiasm with which the Indians now received him was chiefly a reflex of the admiring excitement which prevailed among the whites, there transpired many evidences that the memory of the youthful Kayoula had not disappeared. Among the Southern Creeks, an Indian girl showed him a paper preserved by her as a precious relic, which turned

out to be a letter of thanks addressed to her father by Lafayette forty-five years before. In the western part of New York he was met by the famous Red Jacket, who recalled to his mind that it was he who had argued the cause of the Indians at the council at Fort Schuyler in 1784, where Lafayette had gone in company with Madison. To Lafayette, the renewal of his acquaintance with the Indians was one of the greatest pleasures of the trip, and these incidents were productive of much astonishment and laughter to his French companions. Only one mishap occurred during a journey which exposed the traveller to so many possible dangers. While ascending the Ohio river on his way to Louisville, the steamer struck on a snag during a dark and rainy night. She immediately began to fill. Lafayette was hurried into a small boat and conveyed on shore, notwithstanding his protestations that he could not leave the steamer until he had recovered a snuff-box presented to him by Washington. His secretary, M. Levasseur, went below and secured the snuff-box, and George Lafayette saved a few other valuable articles, standing in the cabin up to his waist in water. The party were all landed safely, and passed some dreary hours on the river-bank with no protection from the rain and only a few crackers to eat. The next morning a freight steamer took them off. Lafayette lost all his baggage, including the books which contained the farming accounts of Lagrange, which he had brought to America in the furtherance of his agricultural studies.

From Washington, Lafayette paid a visit to Mt. Vernon. He passed again through the rooms and over the grounds where he had enjoyed so many hours with the man whose friendship had conferred so much happiness on his life. The remains of General Washington then lay in the old tomb near the river. It was opened, and Lafayette passed a few moments beside the ashes of his departed chief. Few, indeed, survived of the friends and military companions whom Lafayette had known forty years before. Colonel Nicholas Fish, who had been with him at the storming of the redoubt at Yorktown, assisted in doing the honors of New York, and accompanied him on the trip up the Hudson river. "Nick," said Lafayette to him on that occasion, "do you remember when we used to ride down that hill with the Newburgh girls on an ox-sled?" The widow of General Montgomery and Mrs. Alexander Hamilton were both visited by him in New York. Some old friends remained in Baltimore and Philadelphia, notably Mrs. Morris. In Boston, he renewed his friendship with the now venerable John Adams. He passed some days at Monticello with Jefferson, with whom his intimacy had never ceased. There were foreigners, too, in America, the meeting with whom was suggestive. At Baltimore, he met Dubois Martin, then eighty-four years of age, who, as secretary of the Duc de Broglie, had assisted materially in procuring for Lafayette the vessel in which he first sailed for the colonies. At Bordentown, N.J., he visited Joseph Bonaparte. At Savannah, he met Achille Murat, the son of Joachim, ex-king of

Naples, who was cultivating oranges in Florida. During his journey, Lafayette met many old soldiers whose names and faces he remembered. Among them was a man named Haguy, who came one hundred and fifty miles to see the general, who had crossed the Atlantic with him on "La Victoire" as a sailor, and had afterwards served under him in the army. Perhaps the most interesting social event of his journey occurred at Washington, shortly before his departure for Europe, when he dined with John Quincy Adams, the newly elected President, in company with the ex-Presidents Jefferson, Madison, and Munroe, all old and tried friends.

Lafayette was always an interested observer of men and social customs. As a young man he had delighted in the equality of fortune and social position, in the absence of the extremes of wealth and poverty which he observed on every side and which he was inclined to attribute too much to republican institutions. These characteristics were prominent again in 1824, and the study of the prevailing democracy afforded much cause for astonishment to the party of Frenchmen. The general independence and self-reliance of character were much remarked upon. The slight attention paid to high officials of government when travelling through the country, the total absence of the pomp and trappings of authority, the all-powerful and yet invisible rule of law, made a great impression on men who were accustomed to the ever-present display of military and civil forces. In 1824, Lafayette had an opportunity of studying that remarkable feature

of American institutions, — a presidential election. A more than usually exciting contest occurred between four candidates, Adams, Jackson, Clay, and Crawford. Party-spirit ran high, the accustomed predictions of public disaster were heard on every side, and the country settled down after the election as quietly as though nothing had happened.

Lafayette had the satisfaction of seeing that however bitter might be the expressions of partisan opinion, however strong the political enmities of public men, there existed a perfect unanimity in the feelings of all parties toward himself and the historical recollections which he now represented. His visit formed a romantic episode in the life of a very prosaic people. Absorbed in replacing the unbroken forest by pasture and meadow, in creating industries to supply their daily wants, in exchanging their products for foreign articles which they could not make at home, Americans had little energy or imagination to spare for any but practical objects. This industrial and unpoetic population was not inclined to look closely into the speculative merits of Lafayette's political career in France, or to weigh the exact measure of benefit which his early enterprise had conferred on the United States. The generous impulse which had sent him across the Atlantic in 1777, which had kept him by the side of Washington and his starving army at Valley Forge, was appreciated by a people accustomed to self-sacrifice. It was for the qualities of his heart that he was "Lafayetted" in 1824, and that his memory is still cherished in the United States.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## The Revolution of 1830.

THE frigate "Brandywine," with Lafayette on board, arrived at Havre on the 5th of October, 1825, after a stormy voyage of nearly a month. The family of Lagrange were assembled at the port to welcome home their illustrious head. The circumstances attending his reception in the United States had created a great impression in France, and his return became a political event. The determination of the liberal party to do him honor was equalled by that of the royalists to prevent any demonstration. Despite all precautions, the streets of Havre were filled with cheering crowds. At Rouen, the same enthusiasm was manifested, and here the officials of the government gave an illustration of the reason why the presence of this private individual should cause so much excitement in the public mind. While a serenade was in progress beneath the windows of the house where he was staying, a troop of soldiers without warning charged upon the crowd that had gathered and dispersed it with drawn swords. The existence of Lafayette was a standing protest against the arbitrary system of which this incident was only an example. Slow as was the progress of the French people toward any capacity for self-government, there



yet existed a profound hatred of tyranny. The masses of the people resented the excessive exercise of authority, and their hopes of deliverance, as of old, were fixed upon Lafayette.

He resumed his domestic life at Lagrange, seldom going to Paris, but was constantly resorted to for advice by the prominent men in the Chamber of Deputies. The hatred of him on the part of the extreme royalists had been intensified shortly before his journey to America by his persistent refusal to use his title of marquis. The charter conceded to the country by Louis XVIII. reëstablished the nobility in their ancient titles, and the royalists accused Lafayette of violation of the charter by his refusal to resume his title. The government feared him as a popular leader, and hated him as the respectable representative of the still living principles of 1789. The French minister at Washington had received him with marked coldness, and his arrival at an American seaport had been the signal for the departure of any French man-of-war that happened to be lying at anchor. There had even been a question whether the batteries at Havre should be allowed to return the salute of the "Brandywine." Charles X., who had now succeeded his brother, had a lurking personal regard for Lafayette. The Bourbon who had seen his family so often and so meanly deserted did not altogether dislike the old republican of whom he could say, "There is a man who has never changed." One day in the beginning of 1829, when the news-

papers had announced an illness of Lafayette, a committee of deputies was closeted with the king. "Have you any news of M. de Lafayette?" he inquired; "how is he?"—"Much better, sire."—"Ah! I am very glad of it; that is a man whom I like much, and who has rendered services to our family that I do not forget. We have always encountered each other, although moving in opposite directions; we were born in the same year; we learned to ride on horseback together at the Versailles riding-school, and he belonged to my bureau in the Assembly of the Notables. I take a great deal of interest in him."

The immense changes which had taken place in the character and political ideas of the French people were either ignored by the Bourbons and the royalist party, or when forced on their attention were regarded only with contempt. While all classes of the nation, for different reasons, clung to the observance of the spirit as well as the letter of the charter as the guarantee of public peace, Charles X. and his political intimates struggled year after year to effect a return to the system and to the habits of the old monarchy. Measure after measure had been introduced by the ministers into the Chamber of Deputies, having for their object the diminution of the suffrage and other political rights guaranteed by the charter. The persistent opposition of the liberal deputies defeated these attempts, and every new election testified to the popular approbation of their course. Unable to secure the return of ancient despotism, unable to

destroy by law the results of the hated Revolution, the royalist party aggravated the feelings of the people by the ostentatious observance of the ceremonies and customs of the old monarchy. The power given to the clergy and their abuse of it formed a ceaseless cause of popular discontent. While thus maintaining a course of continuous antagonism toward the people, the government of Charles X. made the fatal attempt to intimidate the Assembly. Only a larger representation on the opposition benches resulted. An extraordinary struggle ensued. Charles X., ignoring the first principles of constitutional government, maintained in office ministers to whom the majority of the Chambers were violently opposed. Instead of giving the opposition sufficient representation in the ministry at least to divide their ranks, he could see no solution but to dissolve the Chambers, to choose ministers yet more unpopular, and to seek the return of a less powerful opposition by bribery and intimidation.

Early in 1829, the nation heard with dismay that the Assembly, which had done no more than pursue a course of legal opposition to the wrongful measures of hated ministers, had been dissolved, and that the king had emphasized his act by harsh and threatening words. Public indignation deepened when the formation of the Polignac ministry was announced. The Prince de Polignac, now chosen by the king as his principal adviser, was the son of that Duchesse de Polignac whose intimacy with Marie

Antoinette had contributed so much to the ill-merited hatred of which the unfortunate queen had been the object. Two other of the ministers were associated in the public mind with a period in the history of France which the majority of the people regarded with as much horror as the Reign of Terror. Thus, in a dangerous public crisis, when the crown and the nation's representatives were arrayed against each other in a desperate struggle for the mastery, Charles X. consulted only the prejudices of his family and the obsolete ideas of a former generation. He chose for his ministers men whose unpopularity was sufficient to arouse the fury of his subjects even at a time of general content. He capped the climax of attempted usurpations by appointments which meant nothing less than war between himself and the nation.

The dissolution of the last Assembly had aroused a quiet but universal determination to resist the encroachments of the crown at all hazards. Still the country remained tranquil, awaiting the next move. The cry of the royalist newspapers, "*No more concessions! The combat has begun again between royalty and the Revolution!*" was verified by the advent of the Polignac ministry. Lafayette, soon after the closing of the session, had started on a journey to Chavaniac to visit his son, who now occupied the *château* where his father was born. The general had been greeted at Clermont, Issoire, and Brioude — towns which lay on his road — with only the usual marks of respect. When he arrived at Puy, a city which had

formerly been under the feudal domination of the Polignac family, a public dinner was tendered him. While the guests were seated at table, the news of the Polignac ministry arrived. What had been intended for a social entertainment at once became a political demonstration. The situation was appreciated, and the toasts, "*To the charter, to the Chamber of Deputies, the hope of France!*" expressed the feelings of all present. The next day, when Lafayette pursued his journey, the news from Paris had preceded him, and the people of every town chose his appearance for the manifestation of their feelings. On the 16th of August, he was met outside the city of Grenoble by a troop of horsemen, who escorted him amidst great crowds to the gates. There, a former mayor of the city, at the head of its prominent citizens, presented him with a crown of oak leaves made of silver — the product of a popular subscription — "as a testimony of the gratitude of the people, and as an emblem of the strength with which the inhabitants of Grenoble, following his example, will sustain their rights and the constitution." The same testimonies of popular confidence, and the same resolutions to defend their liberties, greeted Lafayette at every town through which he passed. "*Vive Lafayette! Vive la charte!*" were cries that accompanied him along every road. At Vizelle, where he visited a married granddaughter, the mayor of the city dared to receive him in person, and to conduct him to his granddaughter's house amidst the salutes of cannon. At

Lyons, the demonstrations of the people reached a point which only the blind confidence of the Polignac ministry could ignore. At the outskirts of the city a carriage with four horses awaited him, which, escorted by five hundred young men on horseback, a thousand on foot, and a long line of carriages, proceeded to the gates. There the address made to Lafayette contained ardent protestations against the measures of the crown, and spoke of the situation as critical. "I should qualify as critical the present moment," replied Lafayette, "if I had not recognized everywhere on my journey, and if I did not perceive in this powerful city, the calm and even scornful firmness of a great people which knows its rights, feels its strength, and will be faithful to its duties." Sixty thousand people preceded and followed his carriage through the streets. His house was surrounded all the evening by crowds, whose applause obliged him to show himself at the window. A serenade and an illumination took place. Deputations came from neighboring cities with addresses, and Lyons, during Lafayette's whole stay, was a scene of political ferment, in which the representative of political liberty was the object of universal homage. At the public dinner which terminated his visit, he expressed the feelings of the country in his reply to the toast which was drunk in his honor: "Gentlemen, I am happy and proud that my journey through this great and patriotic city has been for it another occasion to manifest its hatred of oppression, its love of true liberty, its determination to resist all

the attacks of counter-revolutionary incorrigibility. ‘*No more concessions!*’ have recently declared the official journals of that party. ‘*No more concessions!*’ declares in its turn, and with a better right, the French people who know their rights, and will defend them.” While Lafayette was being thus received in Auvergne and Dauphiny, the heir to the throne was travelling through Normandy. Everywhere he met with a significant silence. The absence of the people along his route contrasted with the triumphal arches and illuminations which greeted the private citizen. At Cherbourg, where the dauphin went to examine some new public works, the officials of the city attempted to give him a ball; but enough subscriptions could not be raised, and the project was abandoned.

This hostile attitude of the crown and the nation continued through the winter of 1829–30. The continual conflict between the Chamber of Deputies and the Polignac ministry amounted to a dead-lock in the conduct of public affairs. The nation and the ministry grew more and more determined. But while the former was preparing for active resistance, the latter continued in a state of scornful security. The king could see only one remedy. On the 16th of May, 1830, he again dissolved what he considered the rebellious Chambers, ordered another election, and fixed the reunion of the new Chambers for the 3d of August.

The strenuous efforts made by the government to obtain the return of a majority of deputies whom the

ministers might be able to control resulted in total failure. The temper of the country was shown by a resolution, which neither threats nor money could affect, to send a yet stronger opposition to Paris. When the result became known to the government, Charles X. and his ministers resolved upon striking a blow which would destroy the constitutional barriers to the power of the crown. Warnings from at home and abroad were unheeded. Although the government kept its intentions absolutely secret, the situation was such that every one knew that some extraordinary event must occur. No one hoped that the king would yield to the Chambers, and his only other alternative was to overcome their opposition by violence. From the courts of Austria and Russia, the governments of which guaranteed the throne of the Bourbons, distinct declarations came that if Charles X. violated the charter he could expect no further assistance. Many royalists who saw that the monarchy itself was in danger besought the ministers to keep within the charter, as the only safety for royalty in France. Charles X. and his cabinet had every warning of the perils which surrounded the throne. Concessions to liberal opinion would save it; further aggressions would overthrow it. But the king and his ministers would not see their danger. Pursuing their blind and fatal course, they resolved to destroy by force the liberties of the Chambers and the press. On Sunday, July 25, a cabinet council was held at St. Cloud, where the king was living. The ministers laid before



the king four "ordinances" for his signature. The king hesitated, remained for a few moments in an attitude of painful reflection, and signed. The ministers then signed in their turn. "Gentlemen," then said Charles X., "these are grave measures. You can count upon me as I count upon you. Between us, this is now a matter of life and death." The "grave measures" then adopted by the government of Charles X. consisted of four unconstitutional edicts, called by the delusive name of ordinances, which totally revoked the liberty of the press, and took from the nation's representatives their legal powers. The ordinances were in direct violation of the charter; they formed in themselves a revolution, otherwise called a *coup d'état*. A distinct gage of battle had been thrown down by the court. It only remained to be seen on which side lay the greater force.

The ordinances were published in the "Moniteur" of Monday, July 26. A sort of stupor took possession of the population of Paris. The streets became filled with people, at first mournfully silent, gradually becoming excited and indignant. The journalists being the persons most immediately affected were the first to take action. They met, resolved to resist to the last, and under the leadership of Thiers drew up a bold protest, which was published the next morning. Members of the Chamber of Deputies met and excitedly discussed the deprivation of their rights. The Bourse was surrounded by a vast crowd, who saw with consternation a great decline in government securities.

As the day wore on, business was suspended and the whole population prepared for events the issue of which no one could foretell. The ministers, meanwhile, passed the day in the transaction of routine business. The king and his son hunted even later than usual. So little attention was paid at St. Cloud to public feeling, that Marmont, Napoleon's former marshal and head of the king's military household, knew nothing about the ordinances until eleven o'clock on Monday morning, when he was informed of them by an aide returning from Paris. His efforts to see the "*Moniteur*" failed. The only copy at St. Cloud lay on the king's desk, and etiquette forbade its removal. Marmont hastened to Paris, read the ordinances, observed the condition of the city, and returned to St. Cloud full of misgivings. The king and the dauphin returned from hunting late in the evening. To their inquiries, Marmont replied that great agitation reigned in the city and the funds had suffered a serious fall. "They will go up again," said the dauphin, and all retired as usual.

On Tuesday morning, the printers were thrown upon the streets, their work being prohibited. They formed the nucleus of great crowds which now assumed a menacing attitude. Before noon, barricades had been thrown up and the struggle was begun. At St. Cloud, Charles X. proceeded at leisure to appoint Marmont commander-in-chief of the royal forces in Paris, and ordered him to proceed there to suppress any possible outbreaks. The ministers had prepared

so little for any active resistance, that when Marmont established his headquarters in Paris on Tuesday afternoon, he found a very insufficient force at his command, and even this was not ready for service. That day he could do little but collect and organize his scattered troops. Meanwhile, barricades had arisen on all sides, and the first movements of the military brought conflict and bloodshed. The struggle aroused determination on both sides, and the night was passed in preparations for battle on a great scale.

On Wednesday morning the royal arms were everywhere destroyed, and the tri-color flag, floating from the Hotel de Ville and the towers of Notre Dame, called all of Paris to arms. Marmont had arranged a vigorous plan of campaign, according to which three large divisions of regular troops moved upon the most important points of the city. The soldiers found an army of citizens opposed to them, who poured volley after volley into their ranks from barricades and houses. The battle raged with fury. By mid-day the city was strewn with the dead of both sides and the royal troops were being driven from all their positions. Marmont wrote to Charles X., "It is no longer a riot, it is a revolution. It is urgent that your Majesty should adopt measures of pacification. The honor of the crown may yet be saved; to-morrow perhaps it will be too late." The king would not see the truth. The battle raged all day with frightful carnage. By night, the royal troops had been defeated. They were withdrawn from the positions they

still held, including the Hotel de Ville, and were concentrated at the Louvre and the Tuileries. The whole of Paris but this narrow strip beside the Seine was in the hands of an armed and furious population. The day before, George Lafayette had hastened to L'arange with the news. The general started immediately for Paris, arriving on Tuesday night. He passed Wednesday in going about among the people, encouraging them in the struggle, and in urging the deputies gathered at M. Laffitte's to give the insurgents their open support. His name was already in the mouths of the populace as the chief of the new government they were resolved to establish. By Wednesday night the people had practically achieved their victory; but events had succeeded each other with such rapidity, the issue was so uncertain, that no definite plans for the future had been considered, and the deputies could form no resolution.

On Thursday, the royal troops were concentrated in the Carrousel, the gardens of the Tuileries, and the Champs Elysées, hemmed in by the populace, and exhausted by fatigue and hunger. Marmont declared that he could hold the position three weeks. But discouragement and disgust had taken possession of the troops. A trifling incident caused a panic among the Swiss in the Louvre. They abandoned the building, fell back on the Tuileries, spreading such alarm among the other troops, that in a short time Marmont could find no escape from a rout but in a retreat from Paris by the road to St. Cloud. The

Louvre and the Tuileries were immediately taken possession of by the people, and Paris had ceased to afford shelter to a royal soldier.

Meanwhile, the deputies in session at M. Laffitte's house were seeking means to establish some definite authority. Lafayette was urged to accept the position of commander of the National Guard, to organize and control the national forces. "I am invited," he said to his fellow-deputies, "to undertake the organization of the defence. It would be strange and even improper, especially for those who have given former pledges of devotion to the national cause, to refuse to answer the appeals addressed to them. Instructions and orders are demanded from me on all sides. My replies are awaited. Do you believe that in the presence of the dangers which threaten us immobility suits my past and present life? No! My conduct at seventy-three years of age shall be what it was at thirty-two. . . . Duty obliges me, a citizen, to respond to public confidence and to devote myself to the common defence." The uncertainty of the struggle still seemed so great to some members that they hesitated to adopt any positive measure. But the tumult and loud cries which reached the deputies from the surging masses beneath the windows put an end to discussion. "In the presence of the agitation which reigns without," exclaimed De Vaux, "it is necessary that General Lafayette should show himself to the citizens." M. Laffitte then declared that "General Lafayette accepts the command of the

National Guard offered to him by prominent citizens gathered together in the interest of the defence of the capital." Lafayette had hardly left the deputies when an incident occurred which showed how doubtful the issue still seemed. The discharge of musketry near the house of Laffitte spread a panic among the deputies, who feared that royal troops were coming to arrest them, and in a moment the room was emptied, the deputies escaping by doors and windows. But the news of the total discomfiture and departure of the royal troops soon arrived. The deputies returned with new courage and chose a commission of government.

Lafayette himself was so little convinced that the victory was won, that to young men who carried tri-color cockades he exclaimed, "Not yet, not yet!" In the midst of a vast and cheering crowd, he was taken to the Hotel de Ville, and more carried than led up the stairs. To the people who enthusiastically led the way and directed his footsteps the old man kept repeating, "Let me alone, let me alone. I know the Hotel de Ville better than you!" Lafayette established himself very quickly, and his offices immediately became the headquarters of the Revolution and the seat of authority. The court at St. Cloud remained in a state of inertia, giving no encouragement to the troops who had been fighting its battles without food or shelter. It was late on Thursday when Marmont arrived with the news that Paris was lost and that he brought his defeated troops with him to

St. Cloud. The king still refused to believe the worst. He yielded at last so far as to permit commissioners to go to Paris to make such terms as they could. But at the Hotel de Ville Lafayette refused the commissioners any answer, and the deputies received them little better. The next day, Friday, the hopelessness of the royalist cause was too apparent for even the king and his ministers. Charles X. signed a new ordinance which revoked those which had cost so many lives to the nation and a crown to the elder branch of the Bourbon family. The royal commissioners who brought the king's surrender to the Hotel de Ville were told by Lafayette "that it was too late. We have revoked the ordinances ourselves. Charles X. has ceased to reign." The disorganization among the royal troops caused by hunger, defeat, and disgust with their employment had proceeded so fast, that little more than a guard for his person was left to the king. On the evening of this day the court retired precipitately to Trianon.

During Friday, the deputies labored to find a solution of the difficulty which confronted the country. The great loss of life and the violent passions occasioned by the last few days made it impossible for the people to receive Charles X. again as their sovereign. On the other hand, the word "republic" had still such terrible associations that all conservative men shrank from the thought of such a government. There remained the Duke of Orleans. He had caressed the opposition and ranged himself on the popular side

through all the contentions of the past fifteen years. The deputies resolved to offer him the crown on conditions which would insure the political liberties in the defence of which the blood of so many citizens had been shed. All through Friday and Friday night the negotiations for this settlement continued. The Duke of Orleans, anxious to obtain the crown, but not daring to stretch forth his hand to grasp it, had absented himself from Paris, and not until late on Friday night did he venture to return to the Palais Royal. Early on Saturday morning the deputies proceeded to the Palais Royal, made known to the duke that he was appointed lieutenant-general of the kingdom, and received his assurances that the charter and political liberty should be faithfully observed. But although the deputies could offer the crown, they could not deliver it. The victory had been won by the armed population still massed about the Hotel de Ville. There was the real authority; there the ratification of the deputies' action must be obtained before it could go into force. As M. Laffitte, the leader of the Chamber of Deputies, afterwards declared, "Where was the right to act? At the Hotel de Ville. Where was the power? Again, at the Hotel de Ville. The people, Lafayette, the National Guard—all were there." In obedience to this knowledge, that the Duke of Orleans could obtain his crown only from the people who acknowledged Lafayette as their representative, the deputies formed in procession and marched with the duke in their midst to the historic building.



The reception of the procession by the public showed that all now depended on Lafayette. The cries of "*Vive le Duc d'Orléans!*" were fully equalled by those of "*Vive la liberté, plus de Bourbons!*" "I could hardly control my fears," said one of the deputies who marched. "The crowd was immense and almost universally armed. From a window, a door, a group, a shot might be fired so easily! My heart did not cease to beat until our entrance into the Hotel de Ville." The duke was pale and trembling when he dismounted. As he ascended the stairs, he said conciliatingly to the armed men among whom he passed, "You see a former National Guard of 1789, who has come to visit his old general."

Lafayette had been acquainted with all the proceedings for the elevation of the duke, and his mind was already made up. A constitutional monarchy for France was an idea which for fifty years had been present to his mind as the great object of his life. The Duke of Orleans was well known to him. The two men were allied through marriage with the Noailles family. The prince who now sought his assistance to become king had frequently and solemnly expressed to him the most liberal sentiments. That the Duke of Orleans should receive the crown, not as an inheritance, but as a free gift of the people accompanied by suitable limitations, seemed to Lafayette a worthy termination of the nation's great struggle. He placed a tri-color flag in the duke's hand, led him to a window, and there, in sight of the survivors of the Three Days,

embraced him. The crowds, hitherto undecided, cheered enthusiastically, and the cries of "*Vive la charte!*" "*Vive le Duc d'Orléans!*" which accompanied the return of the prince to the Palais Royal, announced that his new dignity was accepted and recognized.

When the duke had gone, the armed masses about the Hotel de Ville hesitated to abdicate their power until some more decisive pledges for the future were obtained from the new king. Two copies of a list of modifications to the charter were prepared. One was sent to the deputies for their adoption; the other, Lafayette carried in person to the Palais Royal. "I thought," said the general afterwards, "that I should find in the popular confidence and authority with which I was invested the right and the duty to express myself frankly, in the name of this same people, to the proposed king. 'You know,' I said to him, 'that I am a republican, and that I regard the Constitution of the United States as the most perfect that has ever existed.'—'I think as you do,' answered the Duke of Orleans; 'it is impossible to have passed two years in America and not to be of that opinion. But do you believe that in the present situation of France and in accordance with general opinion that it would be proper to adopt it?'—'No,' I said; 'what the French people want to-day is a popular throne surrounded by republican institutions.'—'Such is my belief,' answered the prince." This conversation formed what was afterwards known as the "Programme of the Hotel de Ville." The expressions then used by the Duke of

Orleans were made public by Lafayette, and rallied about the new order the parties who still remained dissatisfied, wanting either no king at all or a king in whose veins ran no Bourbon blood.

On Saturday night, Charles X. took another step toward his exile by retiring to Rambouillet. Through Sunday the disorganization of his troops and the desertion of his party continued, until on Monday even he saw that his cause was lost. With the vain hope of saving the crown for his grandson, he and his son abdicated their claims to the throne and proclaimed the youthful Henry V. On Tuesday a miscellaneous crowd of National Guards and civilians left Paris and threatened the court with a summary vengeance. Rambouillet was no longer tenable, and hastily retreating to Maintenon, Charles X. took leave of what remained of his army, and, under the escort of his faithful guard, journeyed slowly to Cherbourg. There two American merchantmen, the "Great Britain" and the "Charles Carroll," waited to transfer to England what remained of the court. The French captain, d'Urville, commanded on the "Great Britain." As the two vessels sailed out of Cherbourg, side by side, d'Urville was leaning on the rail admiring the appearance and the speed of the "Charles Carroll." "There is a fine ship," said Charles X., joining him; "have we not some as good?" — "Sire," replied d'Urville, "I do not believe that we have in our merchant service a single vessel as well rigged, as ship-shape, and as well handled." — "The Americans are getting on

well." — "Yes, sire ; sixty or eighty years hence they will be able to dispute with England the mastery of the seas." — "It is to us, however, that they owe all that," answered the king, meditatively. — "Yes, sire ; it is to your Majesty's brother, to King Louis XVI. ; they have not forgotten it." The king remained pensive ; then, seeming to reply to his own thoughts, he continued, "It was a mistake, a very great mistake, on the part of Louis XVI." Then he added with a sigh, "But who commits none in the course of his life?" Another day, the king discussed with d'Urville the recent revolution. The name of Lafayette was mentioned. "Ah !" said d'Urville, "he, at least, has never changed." — "Yes, he is an old flag," answered Charles X. ; "for a long time he has wished to be the king of the masses, but he will never be any thing." — "Still, sire, allow me to observe that if M. de Lafayette, during the recent events, had desired a crown, he had great chances for obtaining it. I myself was a witness to the enthusiasm that the sight of him inspired among the people, and certainly the Duke of Orleans was far from enjoying the same popularity." — "Bah ! Lafayette is at once ambitious and a fool ; they used his name, then they will leave him alone." After a few moments of silence and reflection, he added, "Still, that would never have been said of him in his youth ; 'he promised great things, but he has turned out badly.' " — "Your Majesty knew him then when very young, sire?" — "Certainly ; we used to pursue our gymnastic exercises together ; he was

clumsy, awkward ; but he was gracious, amiable, and amused us all. Never would we have thought that he would turn out so badly." Charles X., true to the limited vision and narrow prejudices of his family, could not see that principles and not individual men had caused his overthrow. He left France thinking that the old republican Lafayette had caused all the mischief. And he could not conceive that a man might be actuated in public life by other than motives of personal aggrandizement. He thought that Lafayette had failed because the crown, transferred by the Revolution, had not rested finally on his own head. That the old general should look upon the safety of French liberties as the highest satisfaction which life could afford to him, was an idea incomprehensible to the Bourbon mind. Charles X. had fought his traditional fight, and retired after his defeat like a king. His successor, who now sat on the throne, was also to struggle against the political freedom of the nation ; but, when defeat came to him, he was to leave France as a lonely fugitive, in disguise, hiding from the vengeance of infuriated subjects.

On Tuesday, the 3d of August, the victorious Chambers began the session which Charles X. and his ministers had determined should never take place. On the 9th, the Duke of Orleans entered the Palais Bourbon, where the Chambers were assembled, as lieutenant-general of the kingdom, and left it as Louis Philippe, king of the French. The crown which he carried back to the Palais Royal was not the

hereditary crown of his race. It was the free gift of the people, and might again be taken away. The constitution which he swore to observe was not, like the old charter, a favor granted by the throne, but the organic law of the land, to the observance of which the sovereign was as much bound as the humblest of his subjects.

On the 15th of August, the city of Paris tendered to Lafayette a public dinner, as a recognition that to him, more than to any other individual, the nation owed its deliverance from past dangers and the welcome peace which had followed so closely upon them. The guests included the ministers, the members of the Chambers of Peers and Deputies, the judges of all the Paris courts, the officers of the Department of the Seine and the Municipality, and deputations from the colleges, the academies of the Institute of France, and the National Guard. That night, as Lafayette congratulated his fellow-citizens on the success and valor with which they had defended their constitutional liberties, as he besought them to preserve the fruits of victory by union and order, he could justly think that a life devoted to the attainment of political freedom in France had not been spent in vain. The French people had not yet learned to govern themselves, and many trials still lay before them. But when the revolution of 1830 is thought of in connection with that of 1789, it is impossible to deny the progress of the nation in knowledge of the meaning of the word "liberty," in capacity to distinguish be-

tween abstract theories and definite principles, in ability to resume the ordinary business of life when the object of insurrection was attained. Forty-one years separated the second revolution from the first. The increase of political knowledge, the diffusion of intelligence, the humanizing effect of material prosperity, the growth of a purer religion, were all present benefits which had their origin in the meeting of the States-General. The people were not yet firmly established in political freedom, but they were no longer the slaves of an obsolete feudal monarchy, nor of their own passions. The calamities and humiliations which had beset the path of the nation in its struggle for improvement had never made Lafayette despair. More than once liberty had seemed lost forever, but he never abandoned the cause nor relaxed his efforts to achieve its success. Now, at seventy-three years of age, a substantial, if not a perfect, realization of his hopes greeted his sight. France was a constitutional monarchy, and her inhabitants had shown a promising self-control and respect for law. In the homage and gratitude of his fellow-citizens he had a legitimate cause for satisfaction, and in the bright prospects of his country, a worthy reward for the exertions and sacrifices of a lifetime.

Three years of activity still remained before him, and these were filled with occupations of a public and philanthropic nature. A revolution in Belgium, which left the throne vacant, gave him another opportunity to decline the offer of a crown, which he declared

"would become him as a ring would become a cat." But now, as in 1789, the duties of a deputy had to be laid aside for those of the commander of the National Guard. The Chambers had hardly begun their sessions when some constitutional changes, extremely displeasing to the still excited populace, brought on violent commotions around the Palais Bourbon. To protect the deputies in their deliberations became a serious matter. The employment of troops was impossible. Lafayette presented himself before the crowd, declared that he was responsible for public order, that he had no force to compel it, and that he looked to the people themselves to see that no disturbances occurred. His words were sufficient to put an end to the riot. But it was evident that a force sufficient to prevent a recurrence of similar troubles must exist, and the institution of the National Guard was resumed. At the end of August, a great parade of the Guards took place on the Champ de Mars, and sixty thousand men under the command of Lafayette were reviewed by the king.

The immense popularity now attached to Lafayette's name threatened to overshadow the throne itself. The courtiers of Louis Philippe communicated their jealousy to their master, and he, although continually embracing the general in public, began to cast about for means to rid himself of a supporter whose influence had become inconvenient. But while the court was busy with schemes to send Lafayette back to Lagrange, the trials of the ministers of Charles X. were begun.



The intensity of the hatred with which these men were regarded, and the fear that they would escape the severest penalty of the law, engendered such disorder in the capital that Louis Philippe began to tremble for his crown, the courtiers for their places, and the Chambers for their independence. At this juncture all parties turned to Lafayette for security. The command of the National Guard, of the regular troops, and of the city government was for the time placed absolutely in his hands. The commotions among the people were continuous and violent during the trials. When a sentence of life imprisonment was announced instead of the death penalty for which the public clamored, the fury of the populace was unbounded, and it was hardly expected that the prisoners could be taken from the court alive, nor that a renewal of bloodshed could be averted. But the influence of Lafayette, as well as the wisdom of his precautions, was equal to the occasion. The mobs were kept under control during the trial, and after the verdict the prisoners were conveyed by the National Guard in safety to their destined prison. This accomplishment, for which the general received a vote of thanks from the Chambers on the 23d of December, raised his reputation and influence to a yet higher pitch.

The court, now that the danger was passed, began again to intrigue against him. A bill was introduced into the Chamber of Deputies abolishing the office of commander of the National Guard. Lafayette had frequently declared that the command of the Guard

ought to be divided up and not intrusted to a single man. He accordingly sent his resignation to the king, who was glad to accept it. But relief from this office brought him no idleness. In the Chamber of Deputies and in many private channels he continued his political and philanthropic labors. He was very glad as time passed on that he no longer held a position which made him necessarily a defender of the course of Louis Philippe. Many incidents pointed to the same spirit of aggression on the part of the new monarchy which had overthrown the old, and Lafayette felt that he must not remain an "opaque body" between the king and the people. Indeed, before he died, he had cause to believe that the old fight was not yet fought out; that while a Bourbon occupied the throne, French liberties were not secure. But he hoped that the desired end would be reached gradually by peaceful means. When the dissatisfaction of the people with the course of the government occasioned riot and bloodshed at the funeral of Lamarque in 1832, the populace showed a disposition to begin again the scenes of July, 1830. But their overtures to Lafayette met only with a contemptuous reproof. It was not one of those cases when "insurrection is the holiest of duties." Thus, absorbed in the interests of his country, Lafayette reached the seventy-seventh and last year of his life. Great-grandchildren now played about his knees at Lagrange. The men of his generation had passed away. His work was done.

## CHAPTER IX.

Death of Lafayette in 1834. — His Descendants. — His Character.

LAFAYETTE'S health, naturally vigorous, was preserved by abstemious habits and constant exercise. Excesses, whether physical or mental, were unknown to his evenly balanced nature. At seventy-three his activity and vitality showed hardly any signs of diminution, but several exposures to inclement weather brought on a severe attack of illness in the spring of 1834. He passed away on the 20th of May, at Paris, surrounded by his children, grandchildren, and servants. In accordance with his desire, his remains were placed in the tomb in a corner of the cemetery of Picpus, which already contained those of the wife whom he had mourned so faithfully for twenty-five years.

The news of his death was received in Europe and America with profound emotion. An immense civil and military procession, including the ministers and chief officials of the government, of the courts, the universities and academies, the National Guard, and philanthropic societies, followed his remains to the cemetery through the streets of Paris. On the day of the funeral the church-bells were tolled in France, Belgium, Poland, Switzerland, and Great Britain. Sel-

dom has public mourning for any individual been more general or sincere. In the United States, Congress, on motion of John Quincy Adams, unanimously passed resolutions expressive of the nation's grief and of its gratitude for the sacrifices and services of the illustrious dead. It was ordered that members of both Houses wear an outward badge of mourning for the period of thirty days, and it was recommended to the people of the United States to do the same. In December, John Quincy Adams delivered an address on the life and character of the deceased before both Houses of Congress, the President, and the foreign legations. By order of President Jackson, the same honors were paid to the memory of General Lafayette by the army and navy that had been paid to that of Washington.

Lafayette left many descendants, but they were nearly all in the female line. To his only son, George Washington, M. A. de Vaulabelle, the historian, has paid the following tribute: "I had the honor of sitting near him on the benches of the National Constituent Assembly of 1848. M. George de la Fayette was then an old man; but age had neither chilled his heart nor weakened his convictions; his eyes became moist and his voice showed deep emotion every time that he pronounced the name of his father; every one of his votes testified, also, to an unshaken fidelity to the principles of the first years of his life. With a calm and gentle character, with an honest and upright heart, with a strong conscience, M. George de la Fay-

ette was one of those superior organizations which, having in the highest degree the religion of the right and the good, as well as the energy of duty, seek, in the satisfaction of duty performed, the recompense of their acts: modest and retiring natures, of which the existence is a long devotion and a continual sacrifice, who avoid display and noise, are surprised and blush at the slightest praise, and pass silently through life, honorable and pure, leaving a profound impression of respect among men who knew them." George Lafayette left two sons; the elder, Oscar, lived at Lagrange and died a widower, without children, in 1881. The second, Edmond, remained a bachelor, and has been prominent in political life. In 1875, he was elected to the senate of France by the Council of the Haute Loire, and has since been a valued and useful member of that body. Thus was fulfilled the prediction of Charles Fox, in 1803, that liberty would be born again, perhaps for Lafayette's children, and certainly for his grandchildren.

The career and character of General Lafayette have been too often judged by isolated periods of his life. Americans, with thoughts of his services to them in mind, have been inclined to exaggerate his abilities and pass over his shortcomings. English Tory writers with difficulty have found terms sufficiently severe for the commander of the National Guard of 1789. In France, opinions are even yet colored by party feeling.

The claims of Lafayette to the respect and admiration of posterity do not rest upon his abilities as a

soldier or a statesman, but rather upon his character as a philanthropist. Considering the prominence of the part which he played during fifty-five years of extraordinary political commotions, he never gave evidence of more than good abilities. He had been a brave and faithful officer; but his merits as a soldier lay less in his military talents than in the affection and confidence which his character inspired among his troops. As a statesman, his mistakes have been pointed out in these volumes. The undue confidence in human nature which made him give loose rein to the inexperienced aspirations of a people unaccustomed to self-government; the lack of penetration, which, seeing the misgovernment of the few, could not foresee the misgovernment of the many; the imprudent enthusiasm, which, in pursuit of an abstract good, overlooked the circumstances which made its immediate attainment undesirable,—all these were serious failings in a man of such power and influence.

It is in the force, the nobility, and the unselfishness of his character, in the elevation, purity, and constancy of his moral nature, that we must look for the qualities which enabled him to accomplish so much. It was not in the carefully measured value of his services to America that lay his claim to her gratitude; it was in the spirit of self-sacrifice, in the example set, in the generous adoption of a rightful, though probably unsuccessful, cause. When the States-General met in 1789, it was the well-known unselfishness, patriotism, and honesty of the youthful general

that immediately made him the repository of such immense power. It was the constant determination, at any sacrifice, to remain faithful to principles eternally right, however temporarily discredited, that made him the rallying-point of the friends of political liberty through the despotism of the Empire and the grasping tyranny of the Restoration, and in 1830 gave him the opportunity to set his country again on the path to freedom.

The remarkable consistency of Lafayette's political career was an essential result of his character. He remained the man of 1789 to the day of his death. Offers of power from the Jacobins could not attract him to their illegal rule. A return to France from the exile in Belgium was a bribe offered in vain by the Directory. The reaction toward despotism caused by the excesses of the Revolution left Lafayette still cherishing a rational liberty at Lagrange. The nobility and public men of France waited and bowed at Napoleon's court, deserted him for Louis XVIII., returned to their former master in 1815, only to turn against him in the hour of adversity and to seek again the favors of the Bourbon king by servility and self-abasement. Of all this Lafayette made no part. He waited till 1830 and found a reward and a justification.

The faults of Lafayette's character grew out of its virtues. The enthusiasm was too impulsive, the confidence in others too indiscriminating, the desire to do good too little modified by prudence. Yet had he not been enthusiastic, confident, and benevolent

he would never have taken up the cause of liberty in the shadow of the old French monarchy. Other weaknesses, prominent in his youth, resulted from that age and passed away with it. The love of popularity, which Jefferson had characterized as a "canine appetite," ceased to influence him when the vicissitudes of the Revolution had taught him the value of popular applause. The "delicious smile of the multitude," seductive to the man of thirty, had lost its charm for the man of forty. The fancy for outward marks of greatness — titles and decorations — had so completely disappeared with experience of life, that Napoleon's offer of the highest dignities of the Legion of Honor did not amount to a temptation.

The fault to be found with Lafayette's political views is that they were too advanced for his country. Liberty had appealed to his ardent imagination as the remedy for the terrible public evils which had grown up under a despotic system. His visit to America had furnished so extraordinary a contrast to the miserable state of France, that he was naturally led to believe that his countrymen would be equally happy under similar political conditions. Some of these conditions have since been attained by the French and have borne the hoped-for fruit. But the mistake made by Lafayette, as by the best of his countrymen, was in the attempt to confer such benefits before they could be understood or enjoyed by the people. Throughout his life, he proclaimed order and respect for the law as the essential accompaniment



of liberty. But his countrymen had much to suffer before they could appreciate this doctrine. Although tenacious of his own views, and looking upon a republic as the ideal form of government, he showed himself in 1791 and in 1830 ready to forget his own preferences before the will of the majority.

Few men have lived more for others than Lafayette. While political liberty was the great object of his philanthropic devotion, the cause of the negroes, of persons persecuted for religious opinions, of the victims of oppressive laws, were ceaselessly in his mind. But a short time before his death he exerted himself for the emancipation of the blacks. A character so unselfish, so humanitarian, could not remain indifferent to the Christian religion, the precepts of which his life illustrated. In his youth he had seen religion either in an aspect of puerile superstition, or as discredited by the vices and unbelief of its courtly ministers. For many years he maintained an attitude of silent indifference; but after the death of his wife his feelings underwent a change. New examination and reflection enabled him to separate the essential good from its accidental accompaniments, and attendance at divine service became a habit.

Lafayette had in an exceptional degree the social qualities and domestic tastes which make the happiness of private life. His manner was extremely gracious, the result of a natural kindness which embraced all mankind. His long career had furnished a fund of anecdote which enriched his conversation. He had

the French sprightliness of mind and liveliness of repartee, with a great deal of Anglo-Saxon solidity. His charities were ceaseless and often involved serious self-sacrifice. In his comments on the conduct of other men, he displayed a remarkable degree of moderation and justice. It would be in vain to look among his voluminous correspondence and papers for a single harsh judgment upon the conduct of any of his political opponents. He took it for granted that they were acting conscientiously, and while criticising their opinions never questioned their motives. While the unsuspecting frankness of his nature sometimes led him into mistakes, it had much to do with the strength of the friendship which he excited and retained. Washington, Jefferson, and Fox loved him. Napoleon and Charles X. were personally attracted to the man whom neither bribes nor threats could affect, who accepted no favors, and was guilty of no disloyalty. The honesty of his public career had been in accord with the delicate sense of honor which belonged to his nature. The grief which was felt by all ranks of society at Lafayette's death was a personal one. His familiar figure and revered character had become an old and precious landmark on the road of progress which all men regretted to see no more.

# INDEX.



# INDEX.

---

- ADAMS, John, I., 76; remarks on Lafayette, 112, 152; II., 221, 222.  
ADAMS, John Quincy, II., 222.  
ANDRÉ, Major, I., 78, 115, *et seq.*  
APPLETON, Gen. James, II., 217.  
ARMSTRONG, Gen., I., 78.  
ARNOLD, Benedict, his treason, I., 115; in Virginia, 122.  
ARNOLD, Mrs., I., 116.  
ARTOIS, Comte de, I., 200.  
AUGUST 10, II., 80.
- BAILLY, Mayor of Paris, I., 228.  
BARNAVE, I., 213.  
BASTILLE, I., 223.  
BEAUHARNAIS, I., 208.  
BEDFORD, Duke of, II., 114.  
BERTHIER, Intendant of Paris, I., 242.  
BOLLMANN, Dr., II., 103.  
BONAPARTE, in the revolution of Brumaire, II., 129; remarks on Lafayette, 136, *et seq.*; his fall, 177.  
BONAPARTE, Joseph, II., 221.  
BRIENNE, Lomenie de, I., 202.  
BROGLIE, Marshal de, I., 230.  
BRUNSWICK, Duke of, II., 76.
- CAMPAN, Madame de, I., 108.  
CARMICHAEL, I., 107.  
CHARLES X., II., 225.  
CHASTELLUX, Marquis de, I., 115, 119.  
CHAUMONT, Leray de, II., 144.  
CHEVALIERS du Poignard, II., 20.  
CLAY, Henry, II., 219.  
CLINTON, Gen., I., 135.

- COCHRANE, Dr., I., 102.  
CONSTANT, II., 195.  
CONWAY'S Cabal, I., 57.  
COOPER, Fenimore, II., 150.  
COOPER, Samuel, I., 107.  
CORNWALLIS in Virginia, I., 130, 138, *et seq.*
- DAMAS, de, I., 119.  
DAMER, Hon. G., I., 144.  
DANTON, II., 79.  
D'ARBLAY, II., 156.  
DEANE, Silas, I., 17, 18.  
D'ESTAING, Admiral, I., 88, 91.  
DESTOUCHES, Admiral, I., 123.  
DEVONSHIRE, Duchess of, II., 114.  
DUPLESSIS-MANDUIT, I., 119.  
DUPORTAIL, I., 78.
- EDWARDS, Mrs., II., 121.
- FAVRAS, Trial of, II., 9.  
FEDERATION, II., 14.  
FISH, Nicholas, II., 221.  
FITZPATRICK, Col., II., 114.  
FOREIGNERS in American army, I., 104.  
FOULON, I., 240.  
FOX, Charles, II., 115.  
FRANKLIN, Benjamin, remarks on Lafayette, I., 29, 151.  
FRENCH Alliance, I., 70.
- GATES, Gen., I., 57, 78.  
GÉRARD, I., 88, 102.  
GERMAIN, Lord George, I., 147.  
GIMAT, Col., I., 45.  
GLOVER, Gen., I., 89.  
GRASSE, Admiral de, I., 140.  
GRAVES, Admiral, I., 142.  
GREENE, Gen., I., 78, 90.
- HAMILTON, Alexander, I., 116, 146; II., 120, 122.  
HAMILTON, Mrs., II., 221.

HAYNE, Senator, II., 219.

HENIN, Mme. de, II., 96.

HOWE, Lord, I., 88, 94.

HUGER, Benjamin, I., 31.

HUGER, Francis K., II., 100, 218.

JACKSON, Gen., I., 89.

JAY, John, I., 152.

JEFFERSON, Thomas, concerning Lafayette, I., 172, 174; II., 115, 221, 222.

JONES, Hon. Joseph, I., 127.

JONES, Paul, I., 109.

JUNE 20, riot of, II., 65.

KALB, Baron de, I., 18, 23, 24.

KNOX, Gen., I., 78, 112.

LABARTE, Henri, II., 149.

LAFAYETTE, Edmond, II., 253.

LAFAYETTE, General, adopts American cause, I., 2; ancestry of, 5; childhood, 9; education, 10; at court, 14, 15; character of, 16; arrangements to go to America, 17, *et seq.*; voyage to England, 21; departure for America, 24, 25; arrival there, 31; letters to his wife, 33, 47, 48, 64, 75, 76, 121; application to Congress, 40; appointed Major-General, 41; first meets Washington, 42; at Brandywine, 45; wounded at Bethlehem, 47; at Gloucester, 49; assigned to an independent command, 52; at Valley Forge, 53, 55; with the Army of the North, 65; at Barren Hill, 79; in New Jersey, 83, 85; at Monmouth, 87; at Newport, 91, 97; challenges Carlisle, 100; obtains leave of absence, 101; visits France in 1779, 106; receives from Franklin the sword voted by Congress, 109; obtains Rochambeau's force, 111; arrives in Boston in 1780, 112; at Morristown, 112; letter to Congress, 113; on the Hudson, 115; at Philadelphia in 1780, 119; sent against Arnold in Virginia, 122; in command of troops in Virginia, 126, *et seq.*; blockades Cornwallis, at Yorktown, 141, 142; sails for France in 1782, 149; efforts on behalf of United States, 151; relations with American representatives, 152; helps Carmichael at Madrid, 155; visits America in 1784, 157; his career in America, and relations with fellow-officers, 161; his remarks on Washington's character, 164; travels in Germany and Austria, 167; hatred of slavery, 171; efforts on behalf

of the Protestants, 172; his character, 193; member of the Notables, 198; campaign as deputy to the States-General, 209; declaration of rights, 219; commander of National Guard, 227; his course in the Assembly, 231; organizes the National Guard, 233; his lack of judgment, 247; his opinion of his troops, 253; conduct during 5th and 6th of October, 259; his spirit of innovation, II., 3; relations with Mirabeau, 5, 6; management of National Guard, 10; insurrection the most holy of duties, 12; his great power, 13; conduct during riots, 18, 20; the king's journey to St. Cloud, 22; his resignation, 28; conduct toward the king, 36; riot of Champ de Mars, 39; his views on the state of France in 1792, 42; final resignation as commander of the National Guard, 43; in command of the regular army, 52; his campaign, 53, 57; his letter to the Assembly in June, 60; his arrival in Paris, and his protest, 67; vain attempt to subdue Jacobins, 68; returns to army, 72; plan to save the king, 73; resists the Jacobin commissioners, 85; leaves France, 87; end of his career in the Revolution, 88; imprisoned by the Allies, 93; letters from prison, 96; at Olmütz, 98; attempt to escape, 99; efforts of friends to obtain his release, 114; released on the demand of Bonaparte, 118; confiscation of his property, 120; legacies in his favor, 121; comments on the Revolution, 123; return to France, 131; his financial situation, 137; his debt to Gouverneur Morris, 142; intercourse with Bonaparte, 151; English visitors, 161; his accident, 162; loses his wife, 169; conduct during the Empire, 174; in 1814, 181, 184; in 1815, 188, *et seq.*; under the Restoration, 205; as a conspirator, 207; visit to United States in 1824, 212; Congress votes money to him, 219; course in revolution of 1830, 224; his reception in Auvergne, 229; dinner in his honor, 246; his popularity, 248; his resignation from National Guard, 250; his death, 251; his descendants, 252; his character, 253.

LAFAYETTE, George W., birth of, I., 121; II., 119, 137, 180, 252.

LAFAYETTE, Madame de, novelist, I., 7.

LAFAYETTE, MARQUISE DE, marriage, 11; early life, 12; complimented by Marie Antoinette, 150; under the Reign of Terror, II., 104; Morris's kindness to her, and her gratitude, 105; at Olmütz, III.; offers Morris a mortgage, 142; her death, 169.

LAFAYETTE, Michael Louis, I., 7.

LAFAYETTE, Oscar, II., 253.

LAFFITTE, II., 240.



- LA MARCK, Comte de, I., 266.  
LAMETH, Alexander, II., 95.  
LASTEYRIE, Louis, II., 180.  
LAUDERDALE, Lord, II., 114.  
LAURENS, John, I., 60, 92.  
LEE, Gen., I., 83, 84.  
LEVASSEUR, II., 213.  
LIVINGSTON, Robert R., I., 151.  
LOUIS XVI., II., 30.  
LOUIS XVIII., II., 204.  
LUCCHESINI, II., 116.  
LUZERNE, Chevalier de la, I., 119.  
LYMAN, Gen. Theodore, II., 217.
- MADISON, James, I., 160; II., 222.  
MARIE ANTOINETTE, I., 108.  
MARMONT, II., 234.  
MARTIN, Dubois, II., 221.  
MASCLET, II., 114.  
MCPHERSON, Major, I., 124.  
MIFFLIN, Gen., I., 73.  
MIRABEAU, II., 5.  
MISCHIANZA, I., 78.  
MONTESQUIEU, I., 119.  
MONTGOMERY, Mrs., II., 221.  
MONTMORENCY, I., 208.  
MONTMORIN, I., 248.  
MORRIS, Gouverneur, I., 216, 217; remarks on Lafayette, II., 10;  
on state of France, 59, 90; assists Mme. de Lafayette and lends her  
money, 105; Lafayette's debt to him, 142.  
MOUNIER, II., 13.  
MUHLENBERG, Gen., I., 124.  
MUNROE, James, II., 110, 218.  
MURAT, Achille, II., 221.
- NECKER, I., 223.  
NOAILLES, Vicomte de, I., 119, 208.
- ORLEANS, Duke of, II., 9; in 1830, 241.

PARISH, John, II., 110, 149.

PÉTION, II., 79.

PHILIPS, Gen., I., 126.

PUSY, de, II., 135.

RED JACKET, II., 220.

ROBESPIÈRE, II., 109.

ROCHEFOUCAULD, La, I., 208.

ROMEUF, Alexander, II., 131.

RUSSELL, Mr., of Boston, II., 110.

SÉGUR, Comte de, I., 3, 15, 19, 23; II., 165.

SHERIDAN, II., 114.

SHIPPEN, Mrs. I., 119.

SIEYÈS, II., 132.

STAËL, Mme. de, II., 180.

STEUBEN, I., 78, 134, 162.

STIRLING, Gen., I., 78.

SULLIVAN, Gen., I., 89, 91.

TALLEYRAND, II., 133.

TARLETON, Col., I., 134, 136; II., 114.

TILLY, Admiral de, I., 123.

VARNUM, Gen., I., 89.

VAULABELLE, A. de, II., 252.

VERGENNES, I., 74.

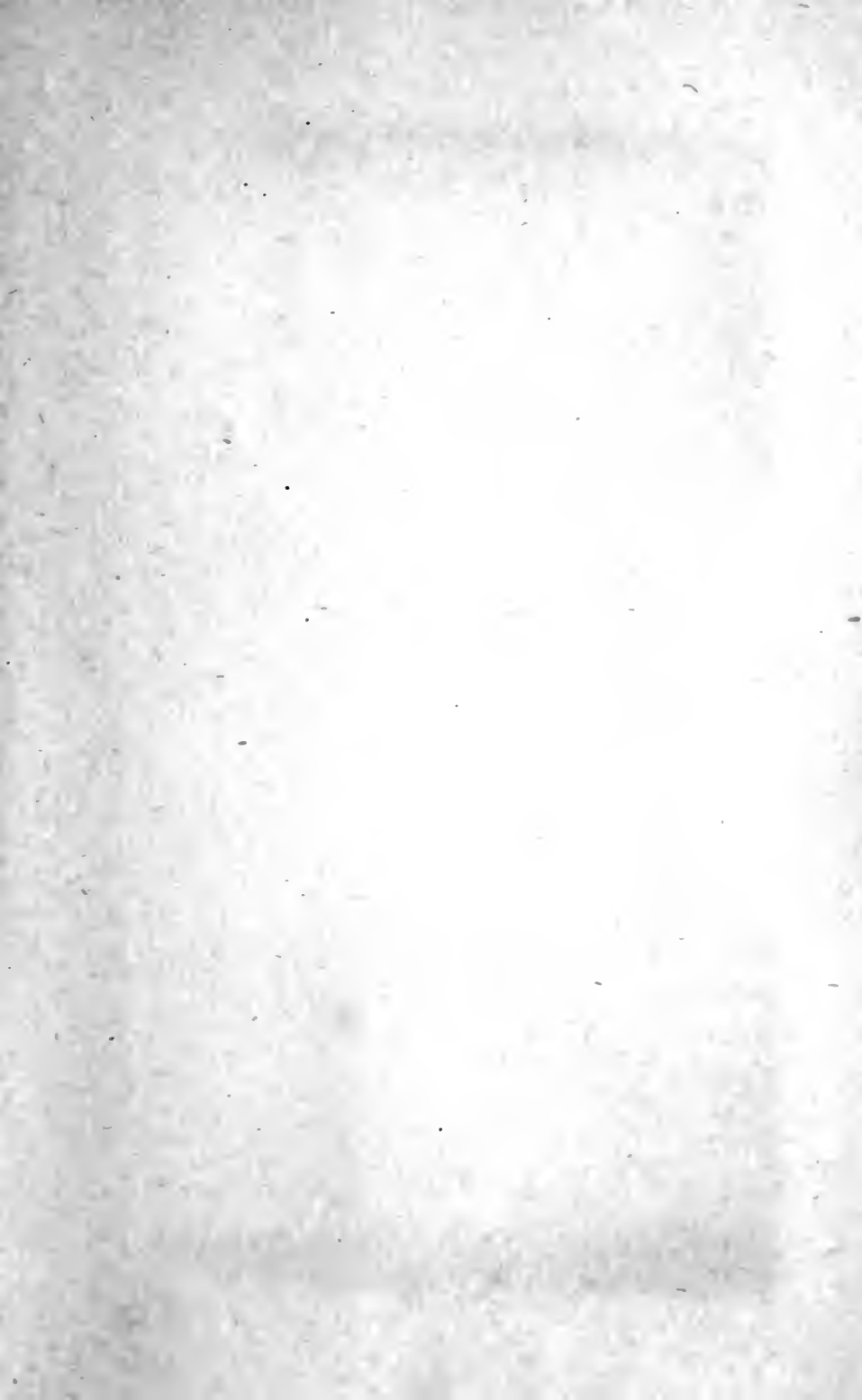
VINCENNES, attack on, II., 19.

WASHINGTON, George, his confidence in Lafayette, I., 52, 79, 89,  
90, 104, 105, 127, 141; letters to, 165.

WAYNE, Gen., I., 136.

WEBSTER, Daniel, II., 217.

WOLCOTT, Oliver, I., 160.









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